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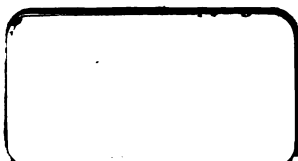
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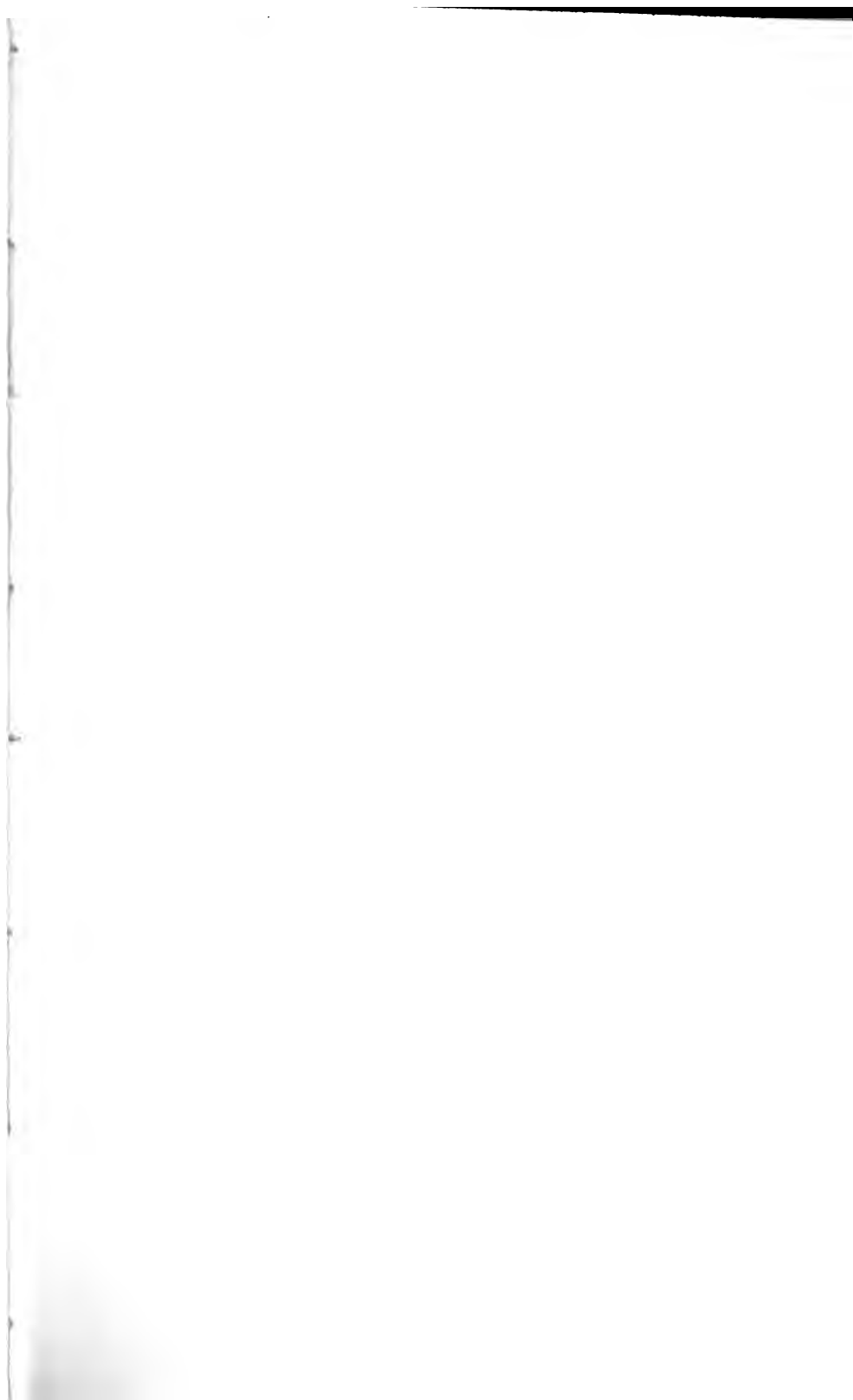
Charles H. Taylor.





Sergeant 331







THE AUTHOR.

Sergeant 331

Personal Recollections
of a Member of the
Canadian Northwest Mounted Police
from 1879-1885

By
F. J. E. FITZPATRICK

NEW YORK
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Charles H. Taylor
Boston

DEDICATED

By SERGEANT F. J. E. FITZPATRICK,
N. W. M. P.,

to his daughter,

SERGEANT AZILDA M. L. FITZPATRICK,
Motor Corps of America

INDEX

Abbott (Sergt.-Major).....	6
Adam (Francois)	22
"Antelope"	49
Asprey (Constable)	108
Battleford	28, 29, 76
Benton (Fort)	15, 16, 18, 29
Big Salt Plain.....	59, 92
Blackfeet Indians	77, 123
Bliss (Sergt.)	52, 53, 68
Bradley (Sergt.-Major)	114, 124
Breeden (Sergt.)	124
Brinner (Constable)	108
Broad View (C. P. R. Station).....	110
Buford (Fort)	12
Calgary	76, 77
"Cataract" (horse)	69
"Chester" (horse)	115
Clarke (Capt.)	3
Cotton (Capt.).....	5, 6, 46, 48, 57, 113, 114, 124
Cree Indians	34, 73
Crowfoot Crossing	77
Crow's Nest Pass	119
Crozier (Maj.)	43
Custer (Gen.)	1
Cypress Hills	16, 26, 57
"Dandy" (horse)	5
Davin (Nicholas Flood).....	107
Dorion	43
Duchesnay (Capt.)	59, 87, 111
Duck Lake	123
East End Post.....	46, 52, 122
Ellice (Fort).....	62, 65, 72, 73, 76, 99
File Hills.....	79, 84, 85, 88
Gault	119
Geneva	56
Grayburn	39, 40, 42, 101
Griesbach (Inspector)	69

Haines	102
"Head of the Mountain"	25, 26
Healy (Sheriff)	15, 16
Herchmer (Col. Wm.)	76, 78, 106, 108, 109
Holmes (Dr.)	101, 103
"Hotel Outside"	57
Houle (Constable)	41
Irving (Col.)	113
Isbister	88, 92
Johnson (Indian)	105
Johnson (Sergt.)	99
Jones (Bobby)	125
Kennedy (Dr. and Mrs.)	114, 118
Lamac (Tom)	65
Lambert	47, 48, 54
Leader (Jack)	79
Leveille (guide)	17
"Little Child" (Chief)	75
Lorne (Marquis of)	76, 78, 79
"Loud Voice" (Indian)	77
Mac Donald (Sir John A.)	3, 100
Mackey (Bob)	88, 91
Maple Creek	61
Martin (Representative)	101
McConnell	80
McCormick	65
McLeod (Col.)	3, 27, 40
McLeod (Fort), 27, 28, 29, 76, 101, 113, 114, 115, 117, 120, 123	
Medicine Hat	61
Milk River	19, 57
Moffatt (Constable)	72, 73
Moose Jaw	61, 110
Moose Mountain	93
O'Connor (Sergt.)	116
Old Man's River	28, 115, 119
Parker	57
Pasquas (Chief)	65

Paton	125
Pearcy (Sergt.)	113
Pennock	121
Perry (Inspector and Mrs. A. Bowen)	118, 120, 124
Pile-of-Bones Creek	104
Potts (Jerry)	89, 77, 78
Prince Albert	76
Qu'Appelle (Fort)	57, 61, 62, 63, 64, 66, 68, 76, 79, 86, 92, 93, 96, 98, 100, 101, 102, 103, 104
Qu'Appelle Lakes	80
Qu'Appelle Station (C. P. R.)	105
Qu'Appelle Valley	69, 87, 88, 99
Red Jacket	70
Regina	61, 104, 105, 106, 107, 108
Regina "Leader"	107
Richardson (Col.)	68, 98, 106
Ross	69, 99
Ryan (Corp.)	68
Shaw (Fort)	76
Shields	112
Shoal Lake	62
Sitting Bull	1, 38, 46, 49, 66, 67
Spicer (Sergt.)	116
Star Blanket (Indian)	90
Steele (Inspector)	14, 57, 65, 86, 87, 88, 89, 93, 94, 99, 101, 102, 113, 114
Stony Mountain (penitentiary)	26
Sun Dance	34-38
Touchwood Hills	63, 79, 90, 91, 92
Treaty Money Day	71
Walsh (Fort)	17, 19, 21, 23, 29, 31, 32, 40, 43, 46, 50, 51, 52, 53, 54, 56, 57, 62, 101
Walsh (Maj.)	52, 53, 66, 68, 69, 70, 112
"Warwick" (horse)	48
Waskanna	104
"Whitecap" (horse)	69
White Mud River	67
Wolsey	99
Wood Mountain	29, 52, 66

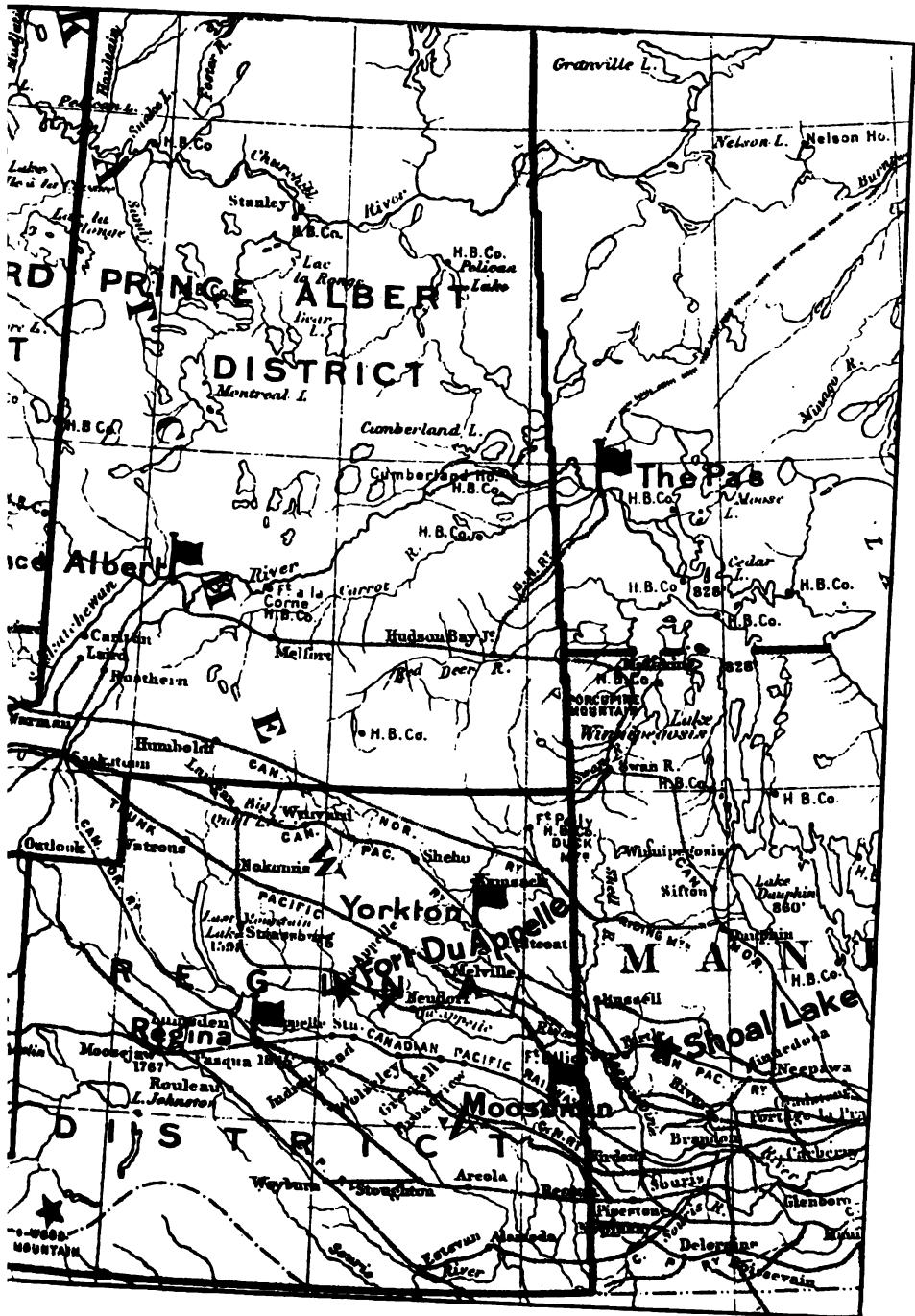
LIST OF ILLUSTRATIONS

Fitzpatrick (Sergt. F. J. E., 1885).....	Cover Panel
Portrait of the Author.....	<i>Frontispiece</i>
Map (Northwest Territories, Canada)	
	Preceding the Introduction
	Opposite Page
Blood Indians (Blackfoot Tribe).....	ii
Cree Indians and Cree Half-Breed.....	21
KA-A-RO-TON (Blackfoot Indian).....	36
Northwest Mounted Police (Divisions "B" and "F", Fort Walsh, 1880).....	53
Benton (Mont.) Bull and Mule Trains, 1880.....	68
Fort Qu'Appelle, Sask., 1881.....	73
Fort Walsh, Cypress Hills, 1875-1881.....	85
Northwest Mounted Police (Post near Banff, 1884)....	80
Cree Indian Camp near Medicine Hat, 1882.....	100
Northwest Mounted Police (Officers at Ft. Walsh, 1880).	105
Commanding Officer's Quarters, Ft. McLeod, 1884.....	112





NORTHWEST TER



TORIES, CANADA.

INTRODUCTION

SERGEANT 331 was a member of the Northwest Mounted Police, from 1879-1885; that is, until after the second Riel rebellion in the Northwest Territories of Canada, which have since been partitioned into the provinces of Saskatchewan, Alberta and the Yukon, still leaving a part known as the Northwest Territory.

The duty of the force was to open up that immense, unknown land to civilization, bringing into it the proper and impartial enforcement of all civil and criminal laws. The force, a civil one, was nevertheless under strict military training and discipline, uniformed and armed. It was composed of a commissioner, superintendents, inspectors and sub-inspectors, who were commissioned officers; of sergeants and corporals, who were non-commissioned officers, and of constables. These composed the active force. The finances and matters of supplies were left to the supervision of a civilian official residing in Ottawa, and holding office under the Department of the Interior, who was known as the comptroller.

The author, in drafting the following pages, has attempted to give a plain narrative of the daily, intimate life of a member of this force, supplying therein a long-felt want among many of his friends, and the general public, interested in the events which have helped to transform a vast expanse of land, utilized until then only as a fur-producing country for

the Hudson's Bay Company, into an agricultural country, with resources of such proportion that it could feed the greater part of the world. Numerous tribes of wild and nomadic Indians constantly traveled its plains in search of game, which was in abundance almost everywhere. There were also in this land several thousand half-breeds of either Scotch or French origin, the ancestry of the first named going back to former employees of the Hudson's Bay Company, and of the latter to former French *voyageurs* or hunters and trappers. The white population was very scant.

The mounted police force numbered approximately three hundred, and had the supervision of a territory, limited as to their activities, of about one thousand miles square. In later years, when the immense territory of the Yukon became the Mecca of the gold hunters who flocked to that far-away region by the thousands, this force was increased to about nine hundred.

No attempt has been made by the author to weave any romance, or to introduce any fiction into this work; he has relied entirely upon the recital of plain, everyday facts to interest his readers. He trusts that he may have been able to do this. That alone will be sufficient reward for his labor.

THE AUTHOR.



BLOOD INDIANS (BLACKFOOT TRIBE).

A squaw in the centre. The Indian on the left, as the reader sees the picture, was accused of the murder of a number of the N. W. M. Police, but was acquitted of the charge at Fort McLeod.

Sergeant 331

CHAPTER I

IT was in the late seventies, when Sitting Bull, the head soldier of the Sioux Nation—and not the Chief, as often called—having had his serious troubles on the American side, and fearing the personal punishment which he imagined was to be meted out to him for his recent massacre of General Custer's contingent, had, shortly before, wisely or otherwise, crossed the forty-ninth parallel to seek security in Canada, the country of his ancestors.

Canadian authorities, however, who were just then preparing to throw open to civilization the entire region of the Northwest Territories, did not view with favor the intrusion of their Southern visitor, having serious doubts as to his peaceful intentions, and being rather inclined to believe that the day was not far distant when Canadian

forces would have to cross lances with this wily redskin. Such was the general opinion, as given out by the Eastern press to the public.

I was at that time only eighteen years of age, residing in Montreal, and I had been for some time a member of the 65th Mount Royal Rifles, a militia regiment of that place. Visions of battles with Indians, the great dream of most boys of today as well as of other days, awakened in me an inward call which I did not try very hard to resist. The field of adventure which lay before me, in the wonderful and trackless, great, lone land, finally brought me to my decision. If possible, I must join the Northwest Mounted Police.

This was not an easy task, for only seventy-six vacancies were to be filled that year—the sixth of its existence—and there were over seventeen hundred applicants. The entire force numbered but three hundred men. Each member of the Canadian Parliament was privileged to indicate two or three applicants from his own section, as candidates. After numerous steps on my part, taken in this and that direction, I found myself among the fortunate ones, and received a summons to appear before the medical examiner at the Hotel Windsor, in Montreal, for a physical inspection.

At the proper time, with five others of the locality, I presented myself. To my dismay, however, I was informed, shortly after being examined, that I was rejected, owing to the fact

that, according to the standard regulations, I lacked—by half an inch—the required chest measurements. All applicants had to be, first of all, of excellent character; between eighteen and thirty-five years of age; absolutely sound physically; weighing not more than 160 pounds; not less than 5 feet 7 inches in height, and at least 34 inches in chest measurement.

Captain Clarke—who, I believe, was a nephew of Sir John A. MacDonald, the Premier of Canada—was then acting as Adjutant to the Commissioner of the Mounted Police Force, and of him I requested an interview with the Commissioner, Colonel McLeod. This request he seemed reluctant to grant. As I was not yet a member of the force, however, and therefore not subject to its strict regulations, I intimated to Captain Clarke that I would secure the necessary interview without his help. This brought about the desired result. I was ushered into the Commissioner's room, where I found myself facing Colonel McLeod, a man of magnificent stature, commanding in appearance, with keen and searching eyes, denoting seriousness and strength of purpose. The Colonel wore a full beard, slightly parted in the center, and a large moustache with long, curling ends. I indulge in a description of his moustache because I learned in later days that when members of the force were brought before the Commissioner under charges he had a habit of twisting the ends of his moustache while the evi-

dence was being taken; and generally the severity or length of a sentence could be anticipated by the number of twists the Colonel had given his facial ornament.

But I am digressing. The Colonel asked the object of my call. I informed him that I wanted to inquire if the half-inch deficiency in my chest measurement was the only reason I had been rejected. He replied that the half-inch was not in itself the only reason; that it might, however, indicate a lack of physical strength, and this quality was very much required to withstand the hardships to be faced in the Mounted Police.

He then proceeded to bring before my eyes a mental picture of the most trying life—the extreme cold of the Winter and the torrid heat of the plains in the Summer; the absence of food, and the scarcity of water for days at a time; the unruly bronchos to be mastered and the treacherous Indians to be dealt with. At the end of his recital he fully believed, I have no doubt, that he had ended for all time my desire for a career in the Mounted. I rather surprised him by asking how many men of the force had died of the hardships since the force was organized—namely, in 1873. He was forced to admit that, up to that time, none had. Then I said: “Does your force go through extension motions, or setting-up exercises?” “Oh, yes,” he said, “everybody but the cook undergoes that in the Spring.” “Then, if that is the case,” I replied, “I shall be over measurement after one

setting-up, and as to the hardships I will readily take my chances."

A broad smile came over his face. He had put me to a test and found me not wanting. He said: "All right, young man, I shall see that you get on." And I did. I believed him—and found, later, that no one had ever had reason to mistrust his word. However, at that time I thought simply of the "slip 'twixt the cup and the lip," and made doubly sure of my acceptance through other channels of influence.

A couple of months later several applicants and myself received orders to report at the Old Fort in Toronto, where we were to undergo some elementary drilling before leaving for the West. We were also to take charge of some seventy-five Eastern horses which were to be tried in the service for comparison with the Western bronchos.

I shall never forget my experience with one of these.

Captain Cotton, one of our officers, had a thoroughbred called Dandy, which he intended for his personal use. One Saturday night he rode Dandy to the city and left him at a livery stable, intending to ride him back to the Fort after the theatre. Owing, however, to the very nasty and stubborn disposition of the animal, Captain Cotton was utterly unable to get Dandy to the Fort that night, and so left him where he was. The next morning, to my great astonishment—which I tried my best not to betray—I received through Sergeant-

Major Abbott a written order from Captain Cotton to go and get his horse.

I had never ridden before, but "mum was the word" so far as I was concerned. I departed for Toronto, a distance of two to three miles, secured the animal, and after being helped into the saddle started on my return. Troubles galore of all descriptions followed, but still I managed to remain in the saddle until, when about one mile from the Fort, the horse, as a culmination of all my miseries, suddenly took the bit in his teeth, and at full speed carried me straight into the barracks square, stopping suddenly in front of the entire contingent, which was in parade formation. Not knowing of all my mishaps on the road, and having witnessed only my arrival, which might have been my finish as well, I was declared a splendid horseman. Only two or three days later I learned, with amusement, that the order I had received had never been intended for me, but for my namesake, a six-footer, and an excellent rider of some repute. I had stolen his laurels unintentionally, but I was well punished for it in the aftermath, for many an ugly broncho or horse with runaway proclivities fell to my lot, all owing to my false reputation as an able rider. I must confess, however, that, after all, it helped me eventually in becoming a horseman of fair merit.

CHAPTER II

AFTER a stay of about three weeks we left Toronto, via Sarnia, for Duluth, on our way to the West. On the short trip to Sarnia we were feted and given send-offs at every eating place along the railroad; girls kissing us good-bye and the crowds shouting hurrahs. In return we kept singing such songs as befitted the occasion, among others "The Girl I Left Behind Me." At Sarnia we boarded one of the Great Lakes boats, and were soon on the magnificent Lake Superior, that greatest of inland seas. Through the first night we experienced one of the worst storms of the season, but the next days were admirable, and we enjoyed the beauties of the trip to their full extent.

On the fourth day we arrived at Duluth, a charming city lying like an amphitheatre in the far southwest corner of the lake. Here we entrained for Bismark, Dakota, which at that time was the Western terminus of the Northern Pacific Railroad, arriving there at about 10 P. M. This place

was in utter darkness, and the mud in the streets was fully two feet deep. We had to detrain our horses and lead them some two miles down the Missouri River to board a flat-bottomed boat, the *Red Cloud*, one of the liners of the river. Our extreme weariness and the absolutely inky night, combined with the two-mile walk in the deep mud, made a combination which easily let all the charms of our departure ooze out of our shoes. We were beginning to get accustomed to the duties of Northwest Mounted Policemen.

We left Bismark the following morning for a journey of fourteen days, to cover a distance of 1,200 miles to Benton, Montana, the terminus of Missouri navigation. The trip might have been tedious and tiresome but for the various incidents which occurred en route and the interesting scenery on this immense river. I have a very vivid recollection of the river view of the "bad lands of the Missouri," with their wonderful rock formations, which to all intents and purposes resemble old cathedrals, castles and fortresses in ruins, pierced here and there with apertures like great windows; and on top of all these, at an altitude of a thousand feet or more, some apparently perfectly contented Rocky Mountain goats or sheep, browsing on mosses, etc. How these animals could ever reach those seemingly inaccessible heights is beyond my calculation.

There were great herds of antelope running wild in the distance, beavers in vast number, and

now and then a stray buffalo crossing the river in front or to the rear of our boat. At other times a small, scattered group of these magnificent animals cantered away from the vicinity, startled perhaps by the shriek of the boat's whistle. That tremendous tract of land appeared to be the huntsman's paradise—seemingly, because the hunter rarely visited it. Wild game, big and small, seemed to exist everywhere.

Every three or four days stops were made to allow us to debark our horses and give them some very much needed exercise on the prairie. Owing to my ill-gotten reputation as a horseman, a vicious black stallion was my share of the lot, and riding such a beast bareback on the prairie was not the most pleasant part of my trip, I can assure you.

At the junction of the Missouri and Yellowstone Rivers small rapids exist, which caused us a delay of some hours, the boat having to overcome the rapids by a cable fastened to what is known as a "dead man." This consists of a strong beam laid in a shallow trench, at right angles to which a narrow opening allows the necessary cable to be passed through, which in turn is gradually wound up by a windlass on the boat, thus shortening the distance between the boat and the "dead man," and eventually bringing the craft above the rapids.

A number of our men, taking advantage of this spare time, landed and ascended the nearest peak, the old captain of the boat having agreed to recall them at the proper time by means of the boat's

whistle. At the summit, or a few hundred feet in height, the view was most interesting, revealing to us innumerable pinnacles resembling sugar loaves. With the eye one could follow, on a continuous crest of ridges called "hogs' backs," the well-worn trail of former prairie schooners or mail coaches such as the famous Deadwood Coach, which in later years was exhibited in "Buffalo Bill's" shows of the West. This trail was, in the earlier days, followed by mail and supply wagons, with either prospectors or supplies going to the Black Hills—that land formerly the hunting ground of the Sioux Indians, and the possession of which, later on, caused many clashes between the redskins and the warriors of Uncle Sam, culminating with the famous Custer massacre.

The delay caused by the rapids was not, however, the only one of the trip. The muddy, shifting bottom of the Missouri—which is extremely shallow in a great many places—was constantly sounded by some deck hand, who stood for that purpose, almost day and night, at the prow of the boat, the result of his observation, either by pole or lead, being announced loudly and in the most mournful tone to the pilot: "Four feet," or "five feet," or "three and a half feet," and so on—with an occasional "three feet scant"—when the boat would come to a stop, and the next announcement would be "going back," meaning that the boat's course had been reversed and she was actually going backward, and would try again some

other channel. In some cases, derricks at the front of the boat would have their lower ends sunk in the mud, the boat put at full speed, and, thus lifted, would pass partly over some sand bar. The derricks were then sunk to the rear, and again the boat sent at full speed ahead, thus practically walking over the obstacle.

These everlasting, monotonous calls, combined with the oft-repeated information that we were going backward, when all of us were more than anxious to arrive at our destination, almost drove some of the men to the verge of a nervous breakdown. We figured that the backward process had added to the distance of the trip almost one-quarter in the aggregate.

CHAPTER. III

WHEN passing Fort Buford, where we made a short stop, we beheld for the first time, on the high banks of the river, 300 or 400 Sioux Indians, in all the glory of their wild-life accoutrements—the younger generation wearing their birthday clothes and the adults dark blue or red blankets, most of them having bead applications. Some of the men had on breech cloths only and wore eagle feathers in their hair, but all of them had their faces covered with the brightest vermilion, with an occasional touch of yellow ochre or green, showing a diversity of artistic taste.

I must confess that the sight of these Indians, who seemed to my mind like a lot of baboons, made me realize for the first time on our trip that we were a long, long way from home—or, as the New Yorker would be more likely to say, “a long distance from Broadway.” I had, nevertheless, an immense mental satisfaction in feeling that at last I was in the land of mystery. I was on the brink

of adventures among those heroes of James Fenimore Cooper—adventures I had never experienced before except in imagination or in print. I felt absolutely happy that my boyhood dreams had at last come true, and this first impression is one of the most vivid and one of the happiest of all my life in the West.

Shortly after this a little unpleasant incident of the trip occurred, in which one of our members, who later was commissioned an Inspector of the force, got into an altercation with one of the negro waiters aboard. This caused a rather rancorous feeling among the other waiters, who numbered about twenty, and to even up matters they secretly decided upon revenge on all of our party. They accomplished it through the drugging of our coffee, which they served to us daily, with the consequence that we became a very busy contingent for a day or so. This, however, obviated the necessity of our visiting any of the famous resorts for our health, and may, after all, have been a blessing in disguise, for a great many of the men were indisposed owing to the continuous use of the water of the Missouri for drinking purposes. This water was nothing but a liquid mud, which we could taste in our coffee, tea, soup, or any other liquid food. The chalky taste and flavor never left our palate; it stuck to us like a poor relation.

We, in turn, decided to square things with the self-appointed dusky doctor who had been the original cause of this peck of trouble, by making a

concerted demand upon the captain that this particular colored gentleman be run ashore at once. Our demand was timed for about 10 P. M., and in accordance therewith our friend was given the plank ashore, with a supply of hardtack and other nutritious provender, to lead the easy life on the lonesome banks of the Missouri for about a week, when the boat would pick him up on its return trip.

On the fourteenth day from Bismark we passed through the Coal Banks, about four or five miles in a straight line from Benton, but a much longer distance by the river course. It was at this place that I first met Inspector Steele, wearing the scarlet uniform of the Northwest Mounted Police of Canada, an officer of magnificent physique, mounted on a steed worthy of the rider in appearance, the whole forming a most picturesque and fascinating picture, outlined as it was on the high banks of the river and silhouetted against the clear blue sky of the West. This officer, with whom I was destined to spend five years of my life in the police force, afterward became a world figure. He commanded the "Strathcona Horse," the Canadian contingent in the Boer war, then a division of the African Mounted Police. Later he commanded the Military District of Manitoba, and finally reached the rank of Major-General in the militia. In that capacity he was sent to England from Canada, to take charge of one of the military districts during the great World War. He died

in England in January, 1919, and his remains were put to rest with an elaborate military funeral, the King's personal representative being in attendance. This funeral was duplicated at a later date in Winnipeg, Manitoba, to which place the body was transferred for final rest. He was a rigid disciplinarian, but a lovable and fearless commander, whom men would have followed anywhere. He was a man without even the knowledge of fear, and his demise is regretted in the extreme by thousands of others as well as myself.

The next day we finally arrived at the end of our river trip, Fort Benton, at that time the great distributing center for the entire extreme Northwest. Bull trains and mule trains by the hundreds, loaded with all necessary supplies for the pioneer, were constantly plying through the streets, which at that particular season were nothing short of a sea of blue, greasy mud.

The hundreds of cowboys and mule drivers or bull drivers made a rendezvous of Benton, and took most of their amusement out in gambling. There were about eighty places, with large wide-open double doors flush with the sidewalk, where ke-no or faro could be indulged in. Stacks of gold eagles or silver dollars were always in full sight. Trouble of any kind occurring in these places was generally ended abruptly by the appearance of Sheriff Healy, who was apparently the right man in the right place—a Western man to handle Western men in Western fashion. No frills or

technicalities ever stood much in the way. When the evil-doer was marched to the lock-up, the size of his fine was regulated by the amount of ready cash carried on his person. Thus a pocketbook of five dollars involved a fine of four dollars, while the possession of some hundreds of dollars would cause the fine to be about four-fifths of the entire amount. There was an alternate choice of working out the fine at one dollar per day, with a ball and chain fastened to the ankle, cleaning the streets of Benton, and with a guard, armed with a loaded carbine, placed in charge, as a reminder that no escape from one or the other alternative was possible.

Considering the character of the floating population of Benton—prairie men, always fully armed, and with the double temptation of booze and gambling—it is extraordinary that such order should have prevailed. I believe the reason was that Healy showed clearly what law and order, backed by determination, will accomplish.

We had arrived in Benton during the Spring rainy season, which averaged about six weeks in duration. The tremendous amount of mud caused by these rains had rendered the range of hills back of the town, which we were to cross on our way to the Cypress Hills in Canada, absolutely impassable to horses with loaded wagons. We were compelled, therefore, to remain nine days at this place so as to allow the roads to become dry and practical for our teams and saddle mounts. Inspector

Steele had arrived with an escort from Fort Walsh in the Cypress Hills, about 175 miles north of Benton, and brought with him a wagon load of saddles which we were to use on our Eastern horses. Unfortunately, though, he had not enough for all of us.

The appropriate time having arrived, our caravan, comprising several four-in-hand teams, quite a number of mounted men and some on foot (owing to the lack of saddles), started for the Canadian border. Old Leveille, the French half-breed guide, was with us, driving his own buckboard, as a rule leading the caravan on the road, but always the last to leave camp, to make sure that all fires were put out. This old man, one of the best guides in the country, was always the essence of politeness, and I have noticed many times since that he has been mentioned as such in many magazine articles referring to the Northwest Mounted Police.

During this trip, when some of us had to "foot it" for a day at a time, we had an experience similar to those which pioneers always relate with very vivid recollection. Such is mine of this occasion. The day was hot, and we had become extremely thirsty; this, in fact, had become our only thought. Our throats were parched and the dust was choking our nostrils. Suddenly we came in sight of a small pond or sheet of water, about one mile to our right. So eager were we to reach this spot that, of one accord, we started on the run. Imagine our chagrin and disappointment when we

found, instead of clear water, a sheet of black, oily water, covered with a scum, the odor of which was sufficient to nauseate any one. But such is thirst that we attempted to drink some of the water by filtering it through our handkerchiefs, but the dose was impossible.

Compelled to return to our path with our thirst unsatisfied, we felt the heat ten times worse. Traveling a few miles farther, we found that the wagon ruts of the trail had at one place caused so deep a cut that some rain water was still in evidence. Here, with 'kerchief filters, we managed to squeeze a few drops of the water, which we drank, relieving our throats temporarily, getting them at the same time well coated with chalky mud. I can say from my short experience that few will ever understand what must have been the suffering of those courageous pioneers of the West who succumbed to the pangs of an unsatisfied thirst.

Our trip from Benton, which at first took us up the hills north of the town, later brought us to the virgin prairie, undulating, apparently devoid of all landmarks save perhaps the Three Buttes or sweet-grass hills of Montana, from which were wafted pleasant perfumed breezes.

The country before us resembled an immense sea of short grass, with a few cactuses here and there, and required, indeed, the service of an expert guide. Now and then, in the absence of wind, a faint odor as of burnt leaves would come to us. Then, pointing to a distant spot, our half-breed

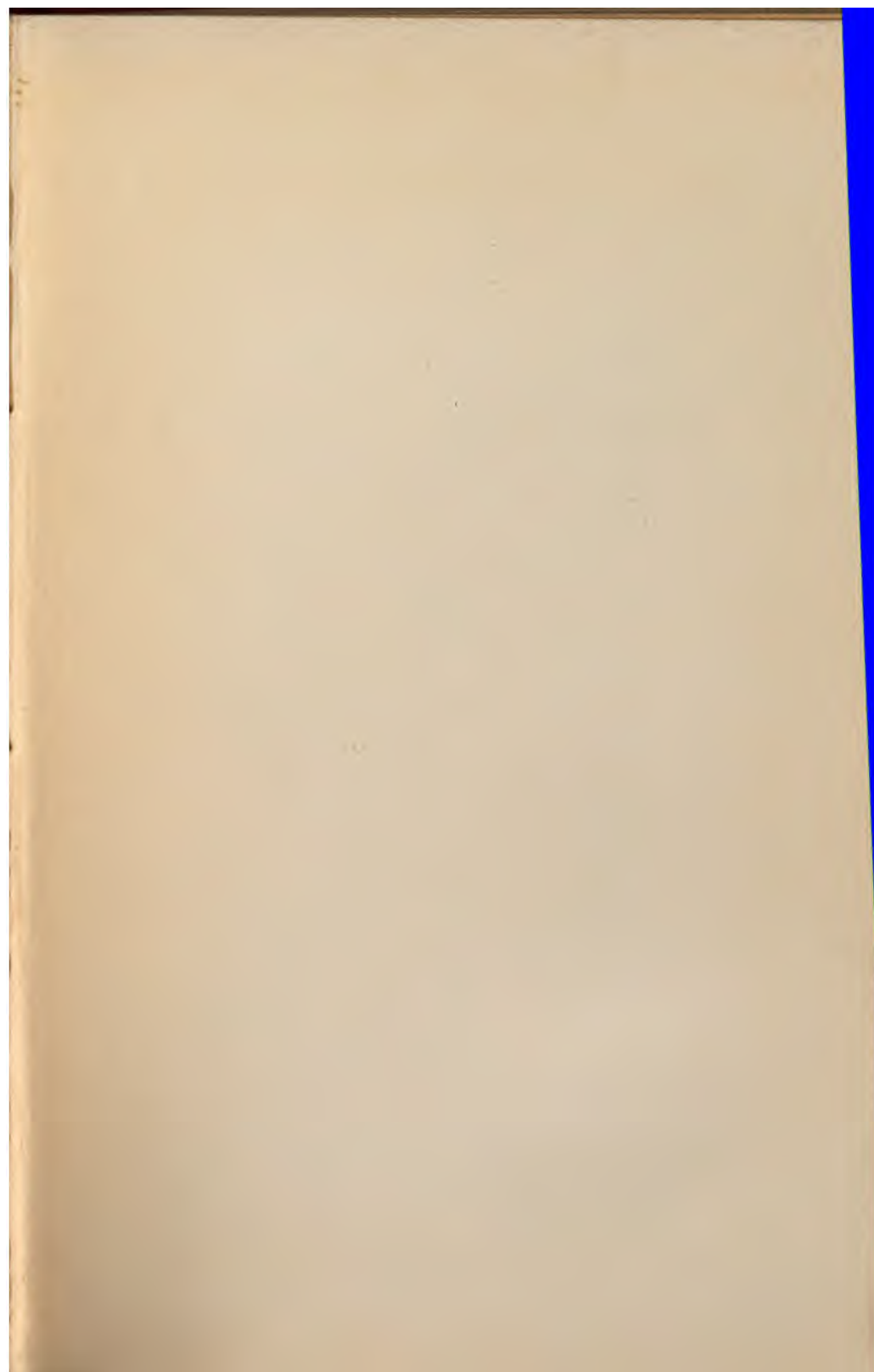
guide would say: "An Indian has recently passed there." The odor was caused through the whole equipment of the Indian having been impregnated with the fumes of Kinik Kinik, or Indian tobacco. This is the substance of the red willow, between the bark and the core, which is dried for smoking purposes, and mixed with certain leaves.

We had with us quite a number of dogs, but lost a few of these through rattlesnakes when near the Milk River.

On the last day of our trip we still had a distance of about ten miles to cover. My namesake, the famous rider, undertook to ride a mare which apparently could not withstand the surcingle of the saddle, and from the very start began kicking both hind feet into the air and plunging forward. This she kept up the entire distance, utterly exhausting herself in the effort, and on our arrival at Fort Walsh she lay down never to rise.

An old team horse having been left behind, I attempted to ride it bareback from our last camp into Fort Walsh. The rough shaking up which I experienced caused me to be laid up in the hospital for a period of one week. I regretted this very much, as on this account I missed a most interesting sight. Some 400 or 500 Indians, with a view to welcoming the new contingent, had come to Fort Walsh in all their war paint and lack of clothing to give a thrilling demonstration of their horsemanship. This consisted of circling, swirling, and intermingling at a terrific speed, and fir-

ing their guns, thus giving, with all the colors of the rainbow used in their ornamentation, a kaleidoscopic effect long to be remembered, as I was able to observe later, on other occasions.





CREE INDIANS AND CREE HALF-BREED
(on the left). From a photograph taken in 1884
near Medicine Hat.

CHAPTER IV

WE had at last arrived at our final destination, where the headquarters of the force were located. Fort Walsh was situated in a valley about half a mile in width, through which a small river ran. The fort itself was quadrangular, with a stockade of trees closely put together, about twelve feet in height, with one bastion. Later this was enlarged by the addition of another, making two bastions, one on the southeast corner and one on the northwest corner.

The length of each side of the fort was about three hundred feet. There was a large log gate at the front and one at the back, the front one having one small opening in it, just large enough to admit of one person passing through at a time. These gates were opened at reveille and closed at sundown, the smaller opening remaining open until ten P. M. As no Indians were allowed inside the fort after sundown, the usual bugle note at that time had had words fittingly adapted to it by the Indians. Upon hearing the call, all Indians inside

the fort would leave immediately, singing the words, "Kee-gally, Kee-gally," which, translated from the Sioux language, meant "Get out, Get out."

Here, then, was the beginning of our life as constables of the Northwest Mounted Police (and not the "Royal"—a prefix granted to them in later years for their gallantry and substantial services in the Boer War).

The duties of the Mounted Police were somewhat an unwritten law. They covered every phase of law, civil or criminal, of that of right and wrong, where authority was involved. Every commissioned officer and every member in charge of a post, in many cases a single constable, was ipso facto a justice of the peace. We acted as magistrates, sheriffs, constables, collectors of customs, postmasters, undertakers, issuers of licenses. We married people and we buried people. We acted as health inspectors, Weather Bureau officials, Indian treaty makers; but above all, as diplomats, when it came to dealing with either Indians or half-breeds. This we did with commendable results, as is well summed up in the verdict which I heard expressed recently in New York, by one, a Belgian, Mr. Francois Adam, who was a magistrate for a great many years in the Northwest, and lived there for thirty-one years. "The finest thing Canada ever possessed," he said, "is the Royal Northwest Mounted Police"—adding, "and I ought to know."

As a matter of fact, in the 46 years of its existence, it has always been free from politics—always fearless in the execution of its duty; and, notwithstanding the necessarily unpleasant experiences with troublesome Indians, designing half-breeds, or law-breakers among the white population of those immense tracts of lands (known today as Saskatchewan, Alberta and The Yukon), no accusation of partiality or unfair treatment has been made, nor has any unfavorable comment, even, been uttered against the force by anyone of responsibility. This is assuredly a unique record for a force that has had within itself a power unparalleled for oppression if it had elected to use it.

The men selected for this force numbered among them a lord, sons of lords, a son of a bishop, a great many sons of prominent gentlemen, and, as a superior officer stated once, "a great many sons of guns." He meant by that young men of a romantic turn of mind, looking for adventure, ready at all times for any emergency.

Now let us come back to our daily life at Fort Walsh. Shortly after our arrival, our uniforms were issued to us; and do not think of scarlet tunics and gold stripes only, but rather of fatigue uniforms, in which we passed most of our time in our young life on the force. The routine of duties was reveille at 5:30 in summer and 6 A. M. in winter; grooming and feeding and cleaning

our mounts; then breakfast. After this, fatigue, which meant work—and real manual work, too; for it was, in a great many cases, menial as well as manual.

You must remember that, at the time whereof I speak, no white woman was in the country—at least, not in our neighborhood. I never saw one for three years. We had to rely on our own ability to make most of our clothes, to cook, bake, wash, sweep and do a hundred and one other kinds of work which usually falls to the lot of the woman of civilization.

Building barracks, thatching roofs with straw and mud, was a special work which was very often reserved for the recruit or tenderfoot, and which had the tendency to extract the last particle of pampered feeling or daintiness from any molly-coddle, should one have found his way into our midst. More drill in the afternoon, riding school, training in the handling of weapons—including revolvers, swords, lances, carbines, and, in some selected cases, seven pounders and nine-pounders, field pieces, etc.—made supper at about 5:30 P. M. decidedly welcome. Daily guard was then mounted, looking to the safety of prisoners and the fort itself, which was closed partially at sundown and completely at 10 P. M., at which time sentries would take their post outside as well as inside.

From time to time Indians or half-breed couriers would bring in reports of Indian tribes com-

ing in a certain direction, while another tribe, enemy of the first, was traveling in a direction which would bring them into conflict. One of our duties was to head them off and compel them to change their course, thus avoiding a sanguinary conflict. Then, again, an Indian would report horses stolen from his camp; and, during the night following, a party would probably emerge from the fort and proceed some 15 or 20 miles, to surprise and surround the offending Indians, whom we would keep within our power by circling around them with drawn revolvers until daylight, at which time we would be able to see more clearly and arrest the guilty ones. We would then take them back to the fort for trial, thus impressing in a wholesome way the entire tribe with the necessity of obeying the new laws of the land, which the red-coated force was there to enforce impartially on all—whites, half-breeds and Indians being alike entitled to equal justice. Many a night excursion of this kind, and a great many others in the daytime, served to enliven the daily routine.

The strict law of the territory against the possession of or traffic in intoxicants of any kind, especially with Indians, furnished us with many a lively encounter. One I remember especially, in which a noted character, who had resided formerly in Montana, attempted the smuggling of whiskey. Having established himself at a place called "the Head of the Mountain," the upper-

most part of the Cypress Hills, he began to barter his "fire water" with some of the Indians.

He had no sooner begun operations than word of his doings was received at headquarters through the numerous scouts that the force had among the Indians and half-breeds. A plan for his capture was immediately figured out, and a couple of our men in full scarlet uniform were sent out to proceed through the open highway, or rather trail, up "the Head of the Mountain." We knew beforehand, however, that their approach would be sufficient to warn the offender to decamp in a hurry, and take the shortest cut to the international boundary. This he did, but he had reckoned without his host. At the furthestmost end of the mountain, right at the foot, nestling quietly in a small ravine, was a party of swift riders, well armed and with the best mounts of the force, awaiting the signal of the look-outs to start at top speed after the prey—deploying in a semi-circle to race after him, awaiting a move of his gun to deliver a volley of shots around his ears. He did make an attempt of this sort when nearing the border, but an immediate volley from our rifles put a quick end to his resistance. He threw his rifle to the ground and with hands up called out: "Boys, you have got me this time"—and we had him.

A quick trial and a sentence of six years in the Stony Mountain penitentiary in Manitoba was the sequence, with an admonition from Commis-

sioner McLeod, the judge of the occasion, that if the prisoner had pulled the trigger of his gun, he would have been enabled to give him a 20-year sentence instead. I believe this man afterwards became a keeper at this institution.

Such rapid and severe punishment, however, did not prevent others from attempting feats of whiskey smuggling, and again and again the brains of the force had to enter upon sharp rivalry with those of the cunning offenders.

Another new arrival from the American side had made his appearance—this time at Fort McLeod, about 75 miles from the boundary and about 50 miles from the foot of the Rocky Mountains. As was the custom in the case of all newcomers, steps were immediately taken to ascertain the particular object of his visit. Nothing very clear or satisfactory having been obtained, we decided that “watchful waiting” was the proper course to follow. It was not very long after that a decoy secured from him the promise of a bottle of rum for a considerable amount in return. The methods of men of his class were generally to have a cache or hiding place for their barreled supplies, to which they would travel in the dead of night, and where they would refill a demijohn. This in turn was carried in a bag which could readily be dropped from the saddle should danger appear. Our plans were to catch them red-handed with the contraband goods in their possession.

On this particular occasion, at about 11 P. M., a small party of us, mounted, left Fort McLeod in a very quiet way, showing no lights, giving all commands almost in a whisper, and going by a roundabout way. We proceeded to a ford of the Old Man's River, some few miles out, where, dismounting all but one of our men (who was left to keep control of the horses), we proceeded on foot and lay down at full length in the grass on each side of the ford and very close to the river's edge. There we stayed without saying a word or making a move, awaiting the tell-tale noise of a horse fording the river. This came at last about 2 A. M. At the moment when the rider, whom we could scarcely see, was finally emerging on our side, a summons to halt and surrender to the Mounted Police was answered by an oath, and a quick compliance with the request. Thus another whiskey smuggler found himself in the toils and had come to the conclusion that whiskey-trading in the Canadian Northwest was not a lucrative occupation.

My good reader must not, however, for all this, imagine that liquor was entirely tabooed in the Territory. A special system of permit was in existence, whereby a resident, on application to the Governor of the Territory—who at that time resided at Battleford, the seat of the Northwest Council—could secure a written permit, signed by the Governor, allowing the applicant to import five to ten gallons of a specified kind of alcoholic

liquor, for medicinal or family use. This permit accompanied the liquor when it entered the Territory, and was cancelled by the first mounted policeman met—generally at the Manitoba Provincial boundary. The stub of the permit, showing the date of cancellation, travelled with the liquor to its destination.

If you will bear in mind the fact that Fort McLeod was 50 miles east of the Rockies, Fort Walsh 200 miles east of McLeod, and Wood Mountain, another post, 200 miles farther east, you have the southern line of the police chain of main posts. Going directly north from Fort Walsh, the central southern post, you would have to travel 500 miles to reach Battleford. There was, at that time, no direct route from Fort Walsh to the north, neither was there any railroad in that immense country. You will readily realize how long, approximately, was the time required between the date of an application for a permit, the sending of the application to Battleford, the proper consideration of the same, and its return to the applicant through the channels of the Mounted Police.

The owner of the fortunate document would then send his order, with his check, by mail, to some firm, preferably in Winnipeg. The mail from Fort Walsh went via Benton, Mont., to reach Manitoba. The shipment would then be made via Red River carts across the plain to its destination, at a speed of about ten to twelve miles

a day, these carts being drawn by oxen. "Old Vintage" surely could safely be applied to the liquid which arrived at last—but alas! for so short a life! A permit was known and recorded for months in advance, and the neighbors—I mean by neighbors anyone residing within a radius of 200 miles, some of them living perhaps fifty to seventy-five miles apart—were sure to have received the good tidings at least three months in advance; and, believe me, they were all in at the death! The records show that the life of a permit after arrival never exceeded twenty-four hours. Its funeral was in some cases the occasion of a grand dance, and was attended by pioneer white men and half-breed men and women. After the celebration, and before departing, the guests would make a note of the date of the next permit, the arrival of which would be attended at whatever cost of travel.

CHAPTER V

THE prairie in all parts of the country abounded in game. Rabbits, prairie chickens, partridges and ducks were there in hundreds of thousands. There were also a great many deer and antelope, with a few stray herds of buffalo showing up now and then.

As it was easy enough to obtain leave of absence, a great many of us would occasionally secure a few days and go hunting. Very little fishing was indulged in, although nearly every lake, big or small—if it were not alkali—was replete with white-fish or pike. As a rule we could content ourselves with hunting the small game.

On an occasion of this kind, three of us—and a half-breed whom we had taken along, half guide and half companion—had gone on the prairie about seven miles northwest of Fort Walsh, and had camped near a small lake. About 8 o'clock in the morning, when it was almost daylight, I noticed a small herd of buffalo grazing in the southeast, perhaps ten miles from us, but gradu-

ally traveling in our direction. We had come prepared for small game only; but being now anxious to secure the sport of a buffalo hunt—the first in my experience—we dispatched the half-breed to Fort Walsh to secure rifles, ammunition and fast horses, known as “buffalo runners.”

We instructed him to come north of our camp on his return, which point the buffalo were likely to have reached by that time. Pending his return, we watched the game pass east of our camp, traveling north, and gradually disappear in a distant ravine, probably to lie down and rest. To save time, my companions and myself proceeded on foot to intercept our courier. We all wore moccasins, and made but slow progress, owing to the fact that every once in a while we had to sit down to extract cactus thorns which had penetrated to our feet. After getting up, we found very often that we had to still lose more time in extracting other thorns which had meanwhile penetrated some other part of our anatomy.

Our courier, to our immense relief, hove in sight at last. We saddled our horses, as we had carried our saddles from the camp, took up our carbines, and were ready for the fray. Our guide cautioned us not to be too hasty, and to do as he did. He chose the side of the ravine from which the wind blew. We soon came into view of the herd, which was resting. We novices were anxious to start shooting at once, but were cautioned

against doing so. We passed opposite a small hollow in the ridge, and were within fifty yards, or even less, of some of the animals, but dared not shoot as yet. Had we come from the windward side, the game would have smelled us a quarter of a mile off, and would have taken the alarm immediately. As it was, we were almost upon them, when, with a leap, they all started for the upper plateau.

We followed them at top speed, ranging ourselves to the right, so as not to cross our fire. We began firing, each one selecting a separate animal. I was soon rewarded by stopping one at the foot of a hill. I dismounted to steady my aim, but was cautioned immediately by our half-breed to remount at once, as there was danger of the wounded buffalo making a charge, in which case I should need all my skill, and the speed of my horse, to escape.

I fired eight shots into this buffalo's head without making much of an impression. He simply stood his ground and switched his tail at each shot. Our guide then advised me to aim at the rear of the shoulder and, after the first shot at that spot, the beast tumbled over.

We proceeded immediately to cut him open and remove the entrails, so as to save the meat, and give the wolves a bait. This would probably keep them busy over night, and would prevent them from attacking the carcass itself, which could not be transported until the next day. We se-

cured the tongue and the tenderloins, which we strapped on the back of our saddles, and then returned to our camp.

Before cutting up our game, we noticed that the rest of the herd, which had described a circle in its run, owing to our attack coming all from the right, was heading straight back in the direction from which it had come in the morning. From the high ground where we were, we could observe some of the animals passing by our camp—a distance of approximately eleven miles—just about fifteen minutes after the moment of our charge. This will give a fair idea of the speed at which these apparently heavy and lumbering animals travel, when fully alarmed. Although in appearance not swift of movement, the length of each plunge forward is tremendous, and none but the speediest horses could keep up with them, and even these only for a short period of time.

At last I had killed my first buffalo, and I will say that it was the greatest sporting event of my life, up to that time. A couple of days later, after a hunt of prairie chickens, ducks, etc., we returned to the fort, to resume our daily routine.

It was not very long after this that some Cree Indians, who were located about six miles from the fort, began their preparations for their annual Sun Dance. This is a very important event in the lives of these Indians, and is tantamount to the writing of the tribal history, except that, instead of being written, it is orally transmitted

by the older generation to the younger one, to be transmitted in turn by the latter to the generation to come afterwards.

Both the United States and the Canadian Governments have forbidden these ceremonials among the Indians, and for good reason, which I will explain later. Suffice it just now to describe the performance.

A rotunda of about fifty feet in diameter was erected, made of small trees, roofed over to a larger tree planted in the center. Walls and roof were made of evergreens and foliage. Ranged in a row inside were a number of stalls, about four or five feet in height. Suspended from the top of the center support hung two or three lariats or ropes, made of braided horsehair, with loops at the lower ends.

The ceremony was about to begin when the Indians, noting the presence of about six of the Mounted Police in scarlet uniforms, extended an invitation to us to have, as it were, front orchestra seats. This we readily accepted, and seated ourselves tailor fashion, in a semi-circle, flat on the ground near the center.

A number of wrinkled old warriors held their drums or tom-toms in readiness. At the first beating of these the Indians intoned a loud, monotonous chant, which we understood was a funeral dirge in memory of their dead. At this moment an Indian, with his long hair hanging over his face, and tied below his chin in such fash-

ion as completely to hide his features, came into the circle crying aloud some lamentation, and proceeded to climb to the top of the middle post, where he secured a seat, and there he continued his loud cries. This, I believe, he was to keep up incessantly for a period of three days and nights, without food or drink of any kind, as an intonement of some sort for his dead.

Meanwhile, Indian men and women, arrayed in the scantiest of breech-cloths, and painted from head to foot in the most horrible manner with red, green, yellow, black and ash color, and with designs of the most fantastic and diabolical sort, had entered the stalls previously referred to, one in each. They were all provided with whistles made of small tree branches, ornamented with bits of fur, brass wires and pieces of colored cotton. In unison they kept time with the beating of the drums, jumping up and down at each stroke, and blowing their whistles—which they kept in their mouths, pipe fashion. Those people were not to eat, drink, sleep or stop for three days, with the inevitable result that most of them dropped to the ground through weakness and exhaustion, even though they were Indians.

While all this performance was proceeding, each one of the old men of the tribe would in turn assume the post of orator, and recite for the edification of the younger element the noble and worthy deeds of his life. He told how many horses he had stolen from enemy tribes, and in



BLACKFOOT INDIAN, NAMED KA-A-RO-TON.

His coat is of leather ornamented with brass heads. He is carrying a repeating rifle common to most Indians at that time (about 1880).



doing so how cleverly he had used his tomahawk—perhaps on an old woman, who had interfered with his plans; also how many of the captured wounded enemy he had scalped or tortured, going through the most fiendish details.

Herein lies the well-grounded objection of any civilized government to this ceremonial. The deeds recited by these old Indians, and gloried in by them, were all against the laws of God and man, but were put before the eyes and ears of children as proper examples to follow; and it is likely that the latter in turn would not fail to emulate their forefathers.

When the recitals were ended, the young men of the tribe, who are called “old women”—mollycoddles, we would say—until such time as they were admitted to the soldier lodge and became warriors, presented themselves to undergo the tests. We saw two of them come forward, looking somewhat pale and haggard. They were motioned by the older men to lie down in front of them. One of the old “hard boiled” Indians then proceeded, with an old dull knife, to cut into the breasts of these young men two parallel straight cuts, on each side, leaving a strip of flesh about half an inch wide, in the center. Under this strip he passed two skewers, crosswise, and bidding the men to rise, he fastened the loops from the hanging lariat around the skewers; and then the unfortunate young fools were wont to throw themselves backward with force sufficient to break

the sticks. In one of these cases, the skin was pulled away almost six to eight inches without breaking, before the young man's sister, wife or sweetheart came to the rescue, by jumping on his shoulders, and thus, with the double weight, succeeded in breaking the sticks.

Other tortures were in store for these applicants, before they would be elected to the class of warriors; but our stomachs rebelled at the brutal exhibition, and we were compelled to leave before the curtain was rung down. We were satisfied to take the rest for granted. We mounted our horses and departed, vowing that one Sun Dance was about sufficient for any white man.

The suppression of this ceremony among the Indians has been a serious undertaking for the two Governments, and I believe it was the indirect cause of the death, by shooting, of Sitting Bull.

CHAPTER VI

IT was customary, through the Summer and Fall, to let our horses graze on the prairie through the day, two or three men taking charge of them in turn. On one occasion one of the men had a dispute with an Indian, and the latter went away muttering. This was a foreboding of trouble for some one, and unfortunately enough, one of our young men named Grayburn, who hailed from Ottawa, was the victim. Having gone back in the evening to the spot where the horses had been through the day, he was probably mistaken for some one else by an Indian, who shot him in the back and shot his horse also.

His absence was noted at the Fort, and a searching party was sent immediately, but nothing came of it that evening. The next morning the search was taken up anew, and, while passing near a ravine, the horse under Jerry Potts, the guide on this occasion, and the most famous one in all the territory, stumbled. In doing so he

disturbed some of the snow which had fallen through the night—the first of the season. The snow at this spot showed traces of blood. The neighborhood was searched immediately, and Grayburn's body was found in the ravine, near this place, and his horse was found there also.

A year or so later the suspected Indian was arrested and tried at Fort McLeod; and, although considered guilty by almost everyone, a jury acquitted him of the charge. The reason for this, someone has said since, was fear upon the part of the jurymen of the revenge of the Indians upon their cattle, should this member of their tribe be found guilty and executed. However, he afterwards was again arrested and found guilty of some other crime, for which he was sent to the penitentiary for a long period of years.

A strange coincidence in connection with the unfortunate murder of our young friend and companion Grayburn, who died through being mistaken for another, was, that not many months later, the man who originally had been the cause of the trouble was accidentally shot and killed by one of our own men, while the latter was unloading his Winchester rifle, after guard dismounting.

Soon after the death of Grayburn, there were three Indian prisoners in the guard room at Fort Walsh, ostensibly under a charge of horse stealing. One of these we thought to be under suspicion of a more serious offence, that of being the murderer of our companion; but the officer in

command did not dare say as much openly, fearing the temper of the men of the force on this question. Be that as it may, however, one evening the three Indians made a break for liberty. No sooner was the alarm given than some of us ran to our horses, and, riding bareback, started in pursuit, armed with revolver or carbine. Others ran in front of the fort, and immediately took pot shots at the fugitives, directing their fire more at one than at the other two—that is, at the suspected one.

The attempt to escape had apparently been prearranged, and while passing over a small hill in front of the fort, where there was an Indian camp, the prisoners had been hurriedly supplied with repeating rifles, and a belt of ammunition each. Our mounted men being in close pursuit, had noticed this detail, and immediately prepared for action. The leader, Constable Houle, coming abreast of one of the fugitives, instantly snapped his revolver at him, but fortunately—or unfortunately as you may have it—this failed to explode. The Indian, at that moment, seeing the number of horsemen close at hand, threw up his hands, letting his gun fall to the ground. He was taken in charge and the pursuit of the second prisoner was resumed. He had taken temporary refuge in some underbrush, but a rifle volley in that direction soon brought him out from under cover, with both hands in the air, and he in turn was captured.

The third prisoner, a younger man, had taken an entirely different direction from the start, following the course of a small river at the rear of the fort, and all effort to locate him proved, for the time being, of no avail. Reasoning that he could not travel very far without food, and that he would most likely try to approach some Indian camp through the night, to obtain supplies, about twenty-five of us disguised ourselves as Indians and strolled over the prairie that night, expecting a call from the wayward one; but nothing came of it.

On the following evening, one of the men, the tailor of the force, who had his own house, surrounded by a stockade, a little distance from the fort, came in to report that an Indian had fallen in his yard, while trying to climb over the stockade, and was lying there unconscious. Some men were at once sent to the spot, and the Indian was brought to the hospital, where he died a few minutes afterwards. He proved to be our escaped prisoner, and word of his death was sent to his camp the next morning.

A rumor had somehow gained credence among the Indians that we intended to hang these three men. This idea may have originated through an inner feeling, or knowledge, on the part of the Indians, that one of the prisoners was the murderer of Grayburn. In any event, upon receiving the news of the death of this prisoner they became firmly convinced that this had been his

fate. Shortly after, Indian women and children were noticed leaving the vicinity, and a number of mounted Indians appeared on the crest of the different ridges surrounding the fort.

To all appearances, this meant an Indian war in preparation. Some of the chiefs, under one pretense or other, came in to see the officer in command, more likely to get their bearings, and size up the surroundings. Major Crozier seized upon the occasion to express his great sorrow for the unfortunate end of their young man, and finally convinced them of his sincerity. If such was the case, they asked that the Major would testify to his friendship by having this young buck buried in the uniform of the Mounted Police, as they considered this a very high honor. To this the Major readily consented, which is why a redskin was buried in the red uniform, some day perhaps to be discovered and brought to light by men of science, who will expatiate upon the conformation of the cranium of an ex-member of the police force, and its similarity, after all, to that of a North American Indian.

All assurances of friendship coming from our friends the Indians were, as a matter of course, taken at all times with a large pinch of salt. We took no chances in this case, and buried the Indian on top of the highest hill east of Fort Walsh. Four men—my former companion of the buffalo hunt, named Dorion, and myself, being two of them—alternated in digging the grave. Two dug

while the other two men mounted guard and kept a lookout for eagle feathers in the grass, expecting a stray shot at any moment. Our apprehensions, however, proved useless, and everything ended quietly.

Summer had come to an end, and with it the everlasting torture of mosquitoes—not only to body but to mind as well. Like all tenderfoot newcomers, I had suffered enough that Summer from this ever-present pest of the prairie. I positively had mosquitoes on the brain, and I began to fear that I could not stay through another warm season in the country.

I have heard, I have seen, and I have felt the mosquitoes in Jersey; but they are as a gentle zephyr compared to a hurricane when it comes to the mosquitoes in the Northwest, where they were by countless millions. The tenderfoot, on that account, was usually provided with a netting, mounted on wire, and this was his best friend during his period of apprenticeship. But I must say that, in the following year, I did not mind nor feel these birds of prey so much, and by the third season I could sleep in comfort, rolled up in my blanket on the plains, my face and hands fully exposed, and could listen to the melodious music of the mosquitoes with interest and amusement. I had become immune, or tough enough not to be disturbed by their bites.

Winter was now upon us; but, as our esteemed Kipling would say, "that is another story." I

shall not at this time enlarge upon its beauties, but I shall reserve their description for those special occasions which brought them forcibly to my notice.

CHAPTER VII

JUST now we are concerned with a short trip from Fort Walsh to East End Post—an outpost seventy miles east, to which four of us were directed to proceed, in order to increase the force there to the large number of eight men, whose duties were to keep Sitting Bull's camp of about four thousand Indians in proper and lawful order. This camp was about six miles south of the post at the time.

Promptly, as ordered, we started with a four-in-hand wagon, well loaded with provisions for the Winter, and with the necessary medicines—that is, whatever each one of us selected as likely to be needed. We had to be good guessers—each one, when at an outpost, being his own doctor, surgeon and nurse.

Thus provisioned, we left under the command of Captain Cotton. Having gone about five miles, Captain Cotton stopped the party and directed us to uncover a box of ammunition which had been put in the wagon, so that we might help ourselves to about fifty rounds each. He had re-

ceived information from headquarters that the professed friendship of the Indians was none too secure, and he thought it was better to be prepared for eventualities, keeping our eyes and ears open as we travelled along.

The thermometer was then about five degrees below zero. We were to arrive at about 10 o'clock that night at the cabin of a hunter whose name was Lambert. Having crossed a good sized lake on the ice, we were nearing this place, when we heard the sound of a small, silver-toned bell coming toward us; but, search as we might, we could not discern anything. It seemed most uncanny. The thing was almost upon us, and yet we could see nothing. Suddenly something brushed against me, and almost gave me "the shivers." I put my hand forward instinctively, and recognized almost immediately, by the feeling, that I had got hold of an antelope. I seized it by one horn for fear it might escape; but still I could not account for the bell, until I discovered a leather strap around the animal's neck, with a tiny bell attached to it. I hung on to my conquest until we had reached the hut, when I brought my captive inside.

We were then informed that it was Lambert's pet antelope, which we could not lose if we tried. Someone gave it a chew of tobacco, and from that moment it was a problem how to get the dear little animal outside again, so intent was it upon staying with us. Some months later, this pet wan-

dered away a little too far from home, and was shot by some Indian, who probably disliked Lambert as much as he disliked them all. Lambert had formerly spent twenty-six years of his life on the Missouri and was a typical frontiersman.

The next day we resumed our journey and finally arrived at our destination without mishap. Captain Cotton and the teamster returned, and we settled down for the Winter. A sergeant was in charge, and a routine of drills and riding lessons was daily indulged in. It was while taking one of these rides, bareback and with spurs on, that a small horse called "Warwick," but which I called "Waterloo," sent me sprawling on top of a low thatched roof, while he stood there looking at me after his bucking stunt, as if thoroughly amused, though I was not.

There being so few of us at this outpost, it was out of the question to keep animals on the hoof for our supply of meat. Most of it would have spoiled before we could have consumed an entire beef. Therefore, our only supply was bacon, pemmican, and dried buffalo meat. This we ourselves supplemented, by means of our guns, with venison, prairie chicken, rabbits, and even bear meat—all of which was extremely good with the exception of the bear meat, which, to my taste, was entirely too oily and greasy. The dried buffalo meat, which resembled sheets of parchment, we would soak in water. It would then absorb all the moisture it had originally held, and

would resemble the appearance of fresh meat. This we then fried with bacon, and it proved a very savory dish.

We made our bread with baking powder, and on special, grand occasions we would add a few raisins, if there were any to be had at the only traders' post in the place. Such bread we classed as a luxury.

Our tea was supplied to us dry and in compressed form, and it was excellent. Tea, by the way, is the best heat-producing beverage that any one can use in excessively cold weather.

I might add, in regard to our food, that not very far from us there was a small lake which proved to be full of whitefish. By means of nets we were able to obtain quite a supply of these, which we would bring to our quarters and dump into a small hut, which was like a natural icebox all winter. When in need of a change of diet we would press out one of these fishes, and with a draw knife proceed to cut the outer surface as one would a piece of wood. We would then cut off the head and tail, split in two, and remove the entrails, which had shrunk to the size of a walnut. This fish, when fried in bacon fat, was indeed fit for a king.

At this post I became acquainted with "Antelope," one of Sitting Bull's Indians, and often he would come, and for hours at a time, exchange with me lessons in Sioux for lessons in English. Through him, mainly, I was able to acquire suffi-

cient knowledge of the language to understand most of what Indians might say, or to make them understand what I wanted. This, together with the sign language, which is common to all Indians, made me feel quite at home with that tribe.

One day the alarm was given that a "grizzly" was in sight on the plain, and a running hunt, buffalo style, was started. The animal was soon brought to bay, and proved an enormous beast, weighing over a thousand pounds. We ate the meat, but, as already said, it did not appeal to many of us.

Christmas came around in the West as well as in the East, and with it vivid mental recollections of glorious nights in the old home; but for all that we were not downhearted in our solitude. Oh, no! On the contrary, we were ready to, and did, go to a great deal of trouble to make the most of it.

On this occasion we had to have the never-failing plumduff—a plum pudding without plums, which was a regular institution. We needed some ingredients for this, such as raisins, spices, etc., and as none were in sight, we agreed that three of the force should go to Fort Walsh—merely a distance of 140 miles out and back—to secure the necessary things. They started, but, alas! man proposes and God disposes. They returned one week after Christmas! The weather, they said, had prevented them from getting back in time, but our suspicions

led us to imagine them gorging themselves with plum pudding in Fort Walsh, and that, as likely as not, we were the "goats."

Instead of having a pudding on Christmas night we enjoyed a little excursion. Two sick horses that were housed in the room next to ours—these rooms being both alike, with bare ground for flooring, one called a bedroom, the other a stable—went out of their own accord. The wind had blown their door open, and they had descended a sharp incline back of our quarters and reached the level of the ice on the creek, where they were in the habit of drinking. Hearing the door slamming, a companion and myself jumped out of bed, and, dressed only in our underclothes, ran out to investigate the trouble.

The horses were gone, and the thermometer was about 35 degrees below zero. We ran back to our room to put on moccasins and wrap ourselves in blankets. Out we went again, but when we tried to approach the horses in our regalia they took fright and started at a trot toward the upper end of the creek, which was narrow, with steep banks on each side. We ran almost two miles in that delightful(?) weather. Despairing of capturing the animals, we threw off the blankets, and thus, with only our underclothes on, we were able to catch them. We brought them back to where our blankets were, and, gathering these up, we mounted the animals and rode them back home. We were like two icicles when we got through, but

we built up our chimney fire, and after fully an hour we got warmed up. Meanwhile, we discussed Christmas, beautiful Christmas, and wondered what our folks at home would have thought if they could have seen us. We laughed, and we thought, too, of the plumduff that we had missed!

I must relate here a story that is told in connection with this station—East End Post. Although I was not there at the time the incident occurred, I believe it to be absolutely true.

Major Walsh, who was in command at Wood Mountain, a main post, 180 miles farther East, had left on his way to Fort Walsh, and passed the East End Post, where he stayed overnight, planning to travel the rest of the distance, 70 miles, in one day. The Major had the reputation of being one of the fastest and best drivers in the country, but had a close second, Sergeant Bliss, a four-in-hand driver of the force, who was also counted one of the best but one of the hardest drivers—that is to say, he was without regard for the horses or oxen under his charge.

Sergeant Bliss had on this occasion been sent to East End Post from Fort Walsh with a four-in-hand team of oxen, with provisions. Oxen generally average twelve miles a day with a load. Bliss, on his return to Fort Walsh, had started early in the morning from East End Post, and was overtaken by Major Walsh, who, always in good spirits, and knowing what a punishment it was for the former to be driving oxen, thought



DIVISIONS "B" AND "F," NORTHWEST MOUNTED POLICE,
at Fort Walsh, Cypress Hills, Sask.

[From a photograph taken in 1880. The officer at the extreme left of the column, as viewed by the reader, is Inspector Dickens, son of the great novelist. The officer at the extreme corner of the formation, nearest the reader, is Inspector S. B. Steele, who later commanded the Strathcona Horse in the Boer War, and, later still, became a major-general in the Canadian Army and had command of a district in England during the World War. He died of natural causes in January, 1919, in England—having by his merit, received the honors indicated by "C. B." and "M. V. O."]]

to tantalize him still further by saying: "Bliss, I want to see you at Fort Walsh to-night," and then proceeded on his way.

Think of the astonishment of the Major, when, having arrived at Fort Walsh that night, even before he had time to have the gates opened, he saw Bliss coming over the hills, brandishing his long whip over his four oxen, which were at a full gallop, and which, a few moments after, arrived where the Major was. All four oxen dropped, never to rally again. Bliss jumped out of his wagon, saluted, and reported: "Major, I am here." He had obeyed an order. The Major bit his lips, but this ended the incident; not so the story, which has traveled ever since, and is known as "Bliss' famous bull run."

CHAPTER VIII

IN the month of March four of us were recalled to Fort Walsh, and, as was our custom, we constructed our own individual sleighs or jumpers for the trip. These were made entirely of wood, not a nail being used in the construction. Their runners, made of green wood, were devoid of any iron, as we found that iron, when clear of snow, would stick to the frozen ground, whereas green wood would glide much more easily.

Everything being in readiness, we departed, carrying with us a small tent, which regulations prescribed as an absolute adjunct for our Winter trip. We did not think it was a necessity, in this instance, as we intended to reach Lambert's place the first night, and make Fort Walsh the next; but wiser heads had framed the regulations, and knew of the Winter hazards. It proved necessary on this trip.

We reached Lambert's place the first night, according to schedule, and left the next morning, intending to reach Fort Walsh that night. We had

eaten our luncheon in a small ravine, and shortly after had ascended to the level plateau of the prairie, but had gone hardly three miles when we were assailed by a terrific snow storm. It came like lightning out of a clear sky. The sun had been shining brightly half an hour before. The wind rose, and roared so fiercely that we had to shout at the top of our voices to be heard. The snow came down in large flakes, and, what was most dangerous, it was wet. We had no choice in the matter. We stopped where we were, put up our small tent, after serious difficulty owing to the gale, and unharnessed our horses, which simply turned their backs to the windward.

Taking our rolled blankets, we placed these inside the tent to keep the edges down and to prevent the snow from filling the inside; and there we sat, awaiting the cessation of the storm. Night came, however, without any respite. Knowing what this meant, we agreed among ourselves that as soon as darkness was complete each one of us should call every five or ten minutes, thus safeguarding against the possibility of any one falling asleep, and the consequent danger of freezing to death, due to the wet condition of our clothes.

Thus agreed, we sat on our rolls of blankets, stamping our feet and patting our hands to keep the blood in circulation. The cold, nevertheless, was gradually gaining on us, and it was soon necessary to put the repeated calls in operation. One of the party, a minister's son by the way, named

Geneva, soon gave up responding. Instantly, and all together, in the dark, we started to punch him, with the idea of getting his ginger up, and with it we got his language up, too. From my remembrance, I feel to this day that it certainly was no place for a minister's son. We woke him up, but it was hard work.

At about 2 A. M. the storm began to subside, and at 3 A. M. the stars were shining. We decided to leave as soon as we could see. Most of us were very numb. Personally, I did not feel my feet, nor my legs, for that matter, clear up to the knees. I felt as if walking on stilts. Our hands and fingers were stiff and almost useless. Some of us, of course, were worse than others. I managed to have my moccasins cut away from my feet by one of my companions, hoping that with only my stockings on—four pairs—there might be freer movement of the feet, which would result in bringing back the circulation. At this time I had a vision of a double amputation being necessary, but I determined I would try to save my feet, knowing how useful they are at times. Fortunately, I did!

It was indeed a disreputable-looking outfit that arrived at Fort Walsh at about 7 A. M. We all looked more or less alike. I do not remember exactly how the others fared, but I do know that I arrived walking in my stocking feet, a pair of socks for mittens, and with a muffler which was so frozen around my neck and face from my breath-



ing that Captain Cotton, who met our party at the gate, had to ask me who I was. He wanted to know where we had been through the night, and we answered him: "At the Hotel Outside." A special detail of men immediately took charge of our horses, and we were served with hospital comfort in sufficient quantity to warm us for the rest of the Winter.

We were fortunate in not losing even a finger. It was not always the same story, as many members of the force lost fingers or toes, and at one time one of them lost both ears from freezing. This constable, a man named Parker, got lost on his way to an outpost on the Milk River, some 70 miles from Fort Walsh. A searching party found him unconscious in the snow. His horse was still there, having been walking in a circle around him for about twenty-four hours. The man's life was saved, but both his ears had been frozen beyond help.

We remained at Fort Walsh until midsummer, when "B" Division—one of the two that had been at headquarters—was transferred to Fort Qu'Appelle, a distance of 850 miles northeast by east from the Cypress Hills. We started in full and complete equipment for our new post, under the command of Inspector Steele.

First, however, we had to submit to a mounted parade, when every part of our equipment, down to the last button, had to be immaculately clean and in proper shape. We wore our full brilliant

uniforms, white helmets and white gauntlets, spurs shining like silver, and so on. Every horse was spick and span, with a shining coat and a well-fed appearance that was agreeable to the eye.

But all of this was to be of short duration, for as soon as we made our first camp all things of beauty would be relegated to our kit bags, and buckskin shirts, old riding breeches, boots and sombreros would come to the front, for we had to be ready for real work.

There would be bogs innumerable to cross, where deep, black mud would be encountered. Wagons would be mired and would have to be pulled out. There would be cooking and baking to be done, the buffalo chips (manure) to be gathered in blankets to supply us with fuel, for you must remember that on the road we traveled we should not find a tree the size of my little finger.

We carried oats in quantity to feed our horses, as these could not be given time enough to feed on the nutritious prairie grass. So, well prepared, we would break our first camp looking like a lot of desperadoes. The hair and the whiskers of the men would start to grow at the same time, and these would not receive any attention again until we arrived at our destination, were it one week or six weeks after.

The horses, which would travel from forty to sixty miles a day, according to the state of the trail, would begin to lose flesh, and the wagons, full at the start, would gradually become depleted

of their contents, and at the end of the trip would be empty, so that instead of having a clean canvas pulled taut over a full load they would show only a number of overhead ribs with the covering lying on the bottom of the wagon. All in all, the appearance of a caravan arriving was somewhat different from one departing. Every man looked unkempt, the horses' ribs could be counted a quarter of a mile away, and very often a number of loose horses would come following the train by themselves, worn to a frazzle by the ravages of alkali water which they had drunk accidentally. An arriving outfit was always a lamentable sight, but it would take only a few days to put everything again in order.

On this particular trip nothing very eventful happened, but it was somewhat of a test for one who was not yet inured to the saddle. I remember that my particular chum on this trip was Captain Duchesnay, who was a constable in the force, but who had at one time been second in command of Battery "B" in Quebec. He and I formed the rear guard. While crossing the Big Salt Plain, a piece of territory which resembled exactly a dining-room table, with absolutely nothing but the straight horizon all around us, the traveling became so monotonous that we both in turn fell asleep in our saddles. In our wakeful moments we experienced the effect of mirage. Both could see, at times, ships, churches, large buildings, etc.,

which appeared as if suspended a few feet above the horizon. We were never deceived, however, knowing full well, from past experience, that nothing of the kind existed in that neighborhood. It was, nevertheless, most interesting.



CHAPTER IX

WE were then traveling over parts of the country which have since become centers of civilization—Maple Creek, Medicine Hat, Moose Jaw and Regina. But little did we dream then what time would bring about but a few years after.

On the last day of our trip we had reached a spot which would today be some five miles south of Regina, Saskatchewan. There we encountered a half-breed, of whom we inquired the distance to Fort Qu'Appelle. He informed us that it was about "twelve miles and a bit." Now, my dear reader, remember the "bit" for future information. This one proved to be exactly eighteen miles, and we had to travel thirty miles to arrive at our destination, in the beautiful Qu'Appelle Valley, where runs a small river which forms a chain of seven lakes in close proximity.

We were delighted with our new location, near the Hudson's Bay Company's fort, and we soon set up our camp and prepared ourselves for a per-

manent stay. This was at about 2 P. M. At 5 P. M. five others and myself were ordered to be ready to start at 8 o'clock the following morning for Shoal Lake. We had come 350 miles; Shoal Lake was 150 miles farther, and at 8 A. M. the next day, with our faces clean once more, the small party left for Shoal Lake, passing Fort Ellice on the way. We arrived in due time. We had ridden from Fort Walsh to Shoal Lake, 500 miles, in twelve and a half days. And yet some people have thought, and said, that President Roosevelt's order of a ride of 90 miles in three days, as a test for the army, was too severe!

Shoal Lake was near the western boundary of Manitoba. It was only a few weeks afterward, however, that this boundary, through legislation, was shifted farther west, and owing to this we found ourselves outside of our prescribed territory. We received orders to abandon the place and return to Qu'Appelle, which we did.

Arriving at Qu'Appelle once more, we found that preparations were being made to build permanent quarters, consisting of one specially large building, made of logs, with a thatched roof. Fearing, however, that the season would be too short to allow the building of a stable on the same scale, it was decided that temporary stables should be built. This was done by erecting walls made of slight trees such as could be found in the valley, with a space of about two feet in depth between these, to

be filled with hay, well packed, a rather hazardous fire risk, but the best we could do.

The barracks were completed very late in the Fall—I should say the Winter, the thermometer having gone down to 50 degrees below zero before we occupied the building. The crevices between the logs not having been thoroughly filled, snow could drift in. It was not an uncommon sight, some mornings in the course of the Winter, to see some one using a shovel to take the snow off the occupant of a corner near the door, who, however, had generally taken the precaution of putting a rubber sheet over his bed before retiring. Notwithstanding this, the quarters were fairly comfortable, as we had great sheet-iron stoves which we kept well filled with wood.

Our tents had remained standing quite late, each one of us having the privilege of choosing between the tents and the unfinished quarters. I had decided for the tent, and was asleep there one night, well covered up with buffalo robes, when some one called me, and stated in the most emphatic tone that he had brought a couple of "stiffs" to sleep with me. On further questioning, I was informed that two surveyors, who had eaten wild parsnips somewhere in the Touchwood Hills, had died of poisoning. My informant, who had brought the bodies to Qu'Appelle, finding no other convenient place, had decided to leave them in my tent until morning. I remarked that up to that time I knew we had to bury dead people, but I did

not know it was our police duty to sleep with them; but this I had to do.

In the following Summer an epidemic of glanders broke out among our horses. The hay stables, where they were located, proved a regular nest for the disease, and one by one we had to take the horses, as soon as they showed signs of infection, to a distance of about one mile, to shoot them.

It was intended that we should destroy the carcasses by burning them, and with this in view our men would first shoot the horse and then go back to the post for the necessary load of wood. It usually happened, however, that by the time the men returned to the place of execution there never was a horse to burn. Indians were always on the lookout, and as soon as our men retired the Indians would proceed to cut up the carcasses for the purpose of food, leaving not even the hoofs. How these people could ever prepare such food without contracting that most horrible of diseases is beyond my scientific knowledge. They not only did this, however, but we knew, also, that they were in the habit of eating poisoned wolves that had been killed with strychnine.

From Qu'Appelle our mails went by couriers, who had ponies and buckboards for the purpose. The mails were three weeks apart, and should you fail to catch one it meant that three months must elapse before an answer could come from the far East—that is, from Ottawa, Montreal, etc.



It so happened that one day Inspector Steele, who was then in command of Qu'Appelle, wanted to send an especially important report to Ottawa, but had just missed the courier. In a quandary, he sent to Chief Pasquas' reserve for an Indian runner named Tom Lamac. Tom was told that he had 24 hours to overtake the mail at Fort Ellice, and if he did this he would get a bag of flour. He was told that he could have either a horse or dogs to get there, but replied that he would go on foot. He started at once, without more formality than a letter to the Hudson's Bay Company's factor at Fort Ellice, stating the intent and conditions of his trip. The distance was 117 miles. He arrived in 22 hours, and received his reward upon his return.

This same Indian could speak English, French, Sioux, Assiniboine, Cree and Saulteaux. He was an excellent runner, but when matched against one of our men, McCormick—in a 25-mile race on Dominion Day—he lost. He was, however, the only Indian who finished out of sixteen starters.

CHAPTER X

I BELIEVE it was in the course of this Summer that Sitting Bull, with his family and a handful of followers, arrived at Fort Qu'Appelle. He had come in the hope of meeting Major Walsh, with whom he had become acquainted at Wood Mountain, and whom he admired and trusted very much. These few Indians hung around the place, awaiting the arrival of each mail from the East, hoping against hope to hear from Major Walsh. They were destitute of everything and starving.

Through compassion, I undertook to feed Sitting Bull's two children, a girl and a boy. The girl was about fifteen years of age, and her Indian name, translated, meant "The-Girl-Who-Winks-At-You-As-She-Walks-Along." I should have called her "The Flirt." The boy was about six years of age. I do not remember his name, but he is the same one who in after years appeared at Madison Square Garden with his family.

The little girl seemed quite grateful, and one

day brought me a pair of slippers which she herself had embroidered, and which she wished me to send to my sister. This I did, and in return I received from my sister, who was in St. Johns Province of Quebec, a silver necklace, which I was to give to the little Indian girl. Meantime, however, the latter had returned to the United States with her father, and I was never able to deliver the necklace to her.

All efforts to get these Indians back to the United States having failed, we received orders from Ottawa that we were no longer to trade with, feed, or even talk to them. I imparted this information to Sitting Bull, who said to me then that the white man had gone back on them, and that sooner than return to the United States he would prefer to drown himself in the White Mud River. He evidently changed his mind later, when he surrendered himself to the American authorities.

It was at about this time that the Canadian Pacific Railway, the construction of which was being pushed from Winnipeg westward, was approaching the eastern boundary of the Northwest Territory. The grading force numbered about 10,000 to 12,000 men, nearly all foreigners, principally Italians. Most of these men were of the roughest kind, and were in the habit of getting all the intoxicating liquors they wanted, Manitoba being a "wet" province.

They were duly informed that whenever they crossed the boundary line this would come to an

end. They thought differently in their own minds, and wanted to know who could stop them. Emboldened by their stand, the numerous hangers-on, who were supplying them and were reaping a harvest, encouraged them, hoping that they might be able to carry on as usual. They actually crossed the boundary, and for a few days continued to get their booze.

Word to this effect reached the nearest post, namely, Fort Qu'Appelle. Corporal Ryan was at once sent to the place, but properly camouflaged in mufti, so as not to divulge his errand until the proper time had come. He soon located nine men doing a thriving business. Having secured the proper evidence, he donned his uniform, put the nine men under arrest, and sent word to Major Walsh, asking instructions as to whether he should hold the prisoners there or bring them to Qu'Appelle.

Major Walsh was then on his way to the place, and received the communication en route. He immediately dispatched Sergeant Bliss, who was traveling with him, to Fort Qu'Appelle with a message to me, instructing me to start at once in order to catch up to him by the next night, and to bring with me all necessary papers and forms to hold Court.

This message was sent to me direct, as I was then filling the office of Clerk of the Court for the Civil and Criminal Court, which was held about every three months, under Colonel Richardson,



BULL AND MULE TRAINS IN BERTON, MONTANA, 1880.

Missouri navigation ending there, these trains were then used for the transport of all freight to Oregon, Washington and the Canadian Northwest Territories.



one of the three Stipendiary Magistrates of the country, who afterwards presided at the trial of Riel, the head of the half-breed rebellion. Inspector Griesbach was in command of the post in the absence of Major Walsh, and I showed him my orders. He replied simply, "Do as the Major wishes you to."

I selected my own trooper, Cataract, and his mate, Whitecap, bronchos, about fourteen hands two in height and of middle weight, and so much alike that they might have been twins. I hitched them to a buckboard, and started at about 5 P. M. I had with me, shackled to the foot crossbar of the buckboard, an Indian prisoner who had been brought from the neighborhood where we were to hold court, and whom we thought it advisable to send back there.

We traveled through the Qu'Appelle Valley until about 10 P. M., when we arrived at the place of a settler named Ross. We had come through what I should call clouds of mosquitoes. These were so thick that, with the speed of the horses, one could hardly open one's mouth or eyes without getting one of the pests within.

We were to stay at Ross' until about 2 or 3 o'clock the next morning. The problem which confronted me, then, was how to take care of my prisoner. Staying at Ross' did not mean a suite of rooms or anything of that sort; it meant simply sleeping out of doors, but with the ability to get a meal without having to cook it. I hit upon the

idea of getting my Indian to lie down with his feet near one of the wheels of the buckboard. I myself lay down on the opposite side, shackling the Indian's feet in my own, through the wheels. I then placed my revolver and the key to the shackles as far away from my head as I could reach, and thus went to sleep, feeling secure.

In the morning, at about 3 o'clock, I released my prisoner, without relieving him of his shackles, however. This allowed him to move about slowly, so that he could prepare a fire for our breakfast, Ross' dining room being out of commission at that hour. After breakfast we started at a lively gait, making three or four stops on the way to refresh our horses. We arrived at our destination at about 7 P. M., having journeyed 120 miles in an actual traveling time of twenty-one hours.

No sooner had we arrived than Major Walsh held court. Every prisoner pleaded guilty. Each one was sentenced to pay a fine of \$200 or to serve six months in jail. The fines were all paid, and in commemoration of the incident the railroad workers, or navvies, as they were known, called the spot "Red Jacket." They had become acquainted with it there; and to this day, I believe, the name has remained. The rest of the railroad job was a prohibition one until the workers reached a "wet" province, British Columbia.



CHAPTER XI

WHEN the force first entered the Territory, Indians roamed the plains at will, and lived by hunting. One of the objects of the Mounted Police was to induce these Indians to sign treaties by which they were to transfer their titles to the land, and to give up their nomadic life.

They were to settle on reserves and become farmers. In return, they were to receive land equal to one square mile for each member of their tribe, and the Government was to supply them with farm instructors and the necessary implements and food until such time as they should become self-supporting. Each chief was also to receive annually \$100, every counsel or head man \$25, and the members of each family \$5 each. For this purpose a card was issued to each family, showing the name of each Indian. New-borns were added yearly, and deceased ones marked off.

The date for the payments was known as Treaty Money Day, and the lure of a plethora of ready cash, here, as in other places, always drew a number of unscrupulous traders, who would try to re-

lieve Lo, the poor Indian, of his wealth in as short a time as possible. Twenty-dollar and \$10 bills were to him one and the same thing as far as value was concerned. The Government, having at heart the protection of its wards, decided for the future to pay them all in \$1 bills.

The Indians showed implicit faith in the police; and, without wishing in any way to discredit the men of the Indian Bureau who actually did the paying, I must say that I have seen many an Indian emerge from the tent where he had been paid, clutching a handful of bills, and make a beeline for the first Red Coat, saying "Tonah?"—that is, "How much?" The constable would count the bills, tell the amount, and the Indian would nod in approval and go his way, satisfied that he had received his due.

One season I was delegated, with Constable Moffatt, to go to Fort Ellice, 117 miles away, on the Saskatchewan River, to get the treaty money, which had been brought there by boat from Winnipeg. We took a four-in-hand wagon and proceeded on our way. Not knowing just how long we might have to wait for the boat, we took ample provisions, among other things a half barrel of hardtack or sea biscuit, which came in very handy toward the end of our trip.

About thirty Indians, who had been traveling on foot from God knows where, came upon us, asking for food. Their appearance was most heartrending, and I shall never forget the sight.





FORT QU'APPELLE, SASK.

From a pencil sketch made in 1881 for the Canadian Government by Corporal F. J. E. Fitzpatrick, of the N. W. M. Police. It is supposed to be the first picture ever made of the Qu'Appelle Valley.

They looked like a delegation from some graveyard. There were men, women and children, with their eyes sunk back in their heads, and all with the look of despair about them. Their arms and legs were like broomsticks; they were starving. At first, we threw them a few pieces of hardtack, but imagine our feelings when we saw the men jump on the children to take away from them the few biscuits they were able to gather in the scramble.

We took immediate steps to regulate these brutes. As a matter of fact, they were more like hungry wolves than human beings. My friend Moffatt, who knew some Cree, the language of these Indians, lined them up in a row. I took my post at one end with drawn revolver. They were told that I would shoot the first one who took a biscuit away from another. Then Moffatt gave them a biscuit each, and this he repeated until all of the children had had their fill. We then gave them the remaining biscuits and some other provisions and proceeded on our way.

We found, upon our arrival at Fort Ellice, that the money was awaiting us. It was contained in nine large wooden cases, and consisted of \$246,000 in \$1 bills. We then secured some fresh bread and started on our return. We went leisurely, as the cases made quite a load for the horses. It took us, I believe, four or five days to come back. Every night we rolled ourselves in our blankets and slept soundly, never even keeping an eye open

to watch our treasure, showing what perfect security had been brought to the country through the advent of the police force.

One morning, at about 8 o'clock, we were startled by finding an Indian lying flat on the prairie, near our heads. We got up, showed him our rifles, and indicated to him the shortest way out of sight, and resumed our sleep. At about 5 A. M. he had returned and re-assumed his post. This time we utilized him. It was a frosty morning, and we had him build a huge fire, which looked decidedly good to us when we got up. We gave him his breakfast and he departed. We learned afterward that this Indian was known as "the crazy one."

Indians who at first questioned the value of the white man's laws, and who doubted the good intentions of the Mounted Police toward them, soon learned the benefits that were to accrue to them from the protection intended for them as well as for all other inhabitants of the Territory. It was not long before many of them showed in different ways that they finally understood the merit of such laws, the decrees of which were thoroughly binding.

One of the Indian practices was polygamy. Although many a pioneer missionary had for a number of years labored among them, and tried to dissuade them from the custom, it had been love's labor lost.

An Indian who felt that his hunting and trapping ability was sufficient to do the providing did

not hesitate to take unto himself several wives. He showed his wealth also by the number of horses he owned. That, in fact, was the real coat-of-arms that denoted a "top-notch." When his children, who were sometimes quite numerous, grew up, it was customary for him to offer a number of horses as a dowry for each of his marriageable daughters. Some clever young buck would then give the preference to the wealthy one, and would walk off with the bride and the horses, all in one operation.

Some of the men of the force—a few, I must say—did fall for the charms of these sometimes pretty maidens, and married them Indian fashion. In some cases they retained them as their lawful wives, but in other cases, just as in civilized parts of our country, they discarded them without much further thought. The Indians knew of this failing of the white man (as well as of that of their own tribe) in this respect, and it was with this in mind that chief "Little Child" of the Saulteaux (who had taken quite a fancy to me), urged me to marry his daughter, a rather good-looking Indian girl, with the alluring offer of 22 good horses to go with the bride. He specified, however, that the wedding should be after the manner of the white man, before a police officer, with signed papers. In other words, he had recognized the white man's law of marriage as being proper protection for his daughter. I admired the motive of his offer very much, but as to accepting it, I deferred this for consideration. I am still considering.

The Marquis of Lorne, who had married Her Royal Highness Princess Louise, the daughter of Queen Victoria, was at this time Governor General of Canada. In view of the fact that the Northwest Territories were then under the control of the Mounted Police, and considered absolutely safe for travel, the Government thought it advisable to have His Excellency take an extended trip through the lands. This was for the double purpose of meeting the Indians as the representative of the Great Mother of whom they had heard so much, and of bringing that land of promise to the attention of all possible immigrants in the old country, where full reports, and numerous illustrations by Remington, who accompanied the Governor in his travels, were sure to draw the interest of thousands.

In due time the Marquis arrived at Fort Ellice, coming there by train and boat from Ottawa. From this place the police were to furnish him with the proper escort, not so much as a means of safety but more as an honor in keeping with the dignity of his exalted office, the highest in Canada.

An escort of forty men, under Colonel William Herchmer, a superintendent of the force, left Qu'Appelle to meet the Marquis at Fort Ellice. They escorted him first to Fort Qu'Appelle, then northward through numerous small settlements on the way to Prince Albert, then to Battleford, and from there southward toward Calgary and Fort McLeod, eventually reaching Fort Shaw on the

American side of the line, where American officers took him in charge for safe return via the railroad.

At Crowfoot Crossing, not very far from Calgary, the Blackfeet tribe had prepared a most elaborate reception for the son-in-law of the Great Mother. There was a full meeting of these Indians, probably 5,000 of them; and, after numerous displays of horsemanship, a buffalo dance, and other special ceremonies, which were all reproduced by sketches from the facile brush of Remington, a grand pow-wow or speechmaking event took place.

I will give you now the only translation ever made of one of these speeches. However, before coming to this anecdote, I will say that Jerry Potts, of whom I have previously spoken in these pages, was the guide and interpreter of this expedition. In the course of his career he had been present and acted as interpreter at countless pow-wows of less importance than this one, and had become fully convinced of the inevitable finale of all, which, when summed up, meant, in his mind, but one thing—food. The Indians generally received a bag of flour, some beef and some tobacco, and, as a rule, they departed fully satisfied with the success of their mission. Jerry Potts, you must remember, too, was a man who never used two words where one was sufficient.

On this particular occasion, "Loud Voice," the orator of the Blackfeet—well chosen on account

of his stature of over six feet, and his stentorian voice, of the capacity and quality of that of a Bryan—was to deliver the oration. Facing him, in the center of the circle, sat His Excellency, and on his right Colonel Herchmer, commandant of the escort, with Jerry Potts at his elbow.

The speech began at a "mile-a-minute-Murphy" speed. After listening attentively for about 15 minutes, the Marquis motioned the Indian to stop, and inquired through Colonel Herchmer for an interpretation of the speech so far, saying that the interpreter would not remember all if it went on without interruption. Jerry Potts simply replied, "Let him go on." They let him go on, to be interrupted three or four times again, but always with the same result. The Marquis finally gave up further attempts at premature translation. "Loud Voice" spoke for fully one hour and a half, at the end of which time he sat down at the sound of thousands of "how-hows" on the part of the other Indians present, signifying their concurrence in what he had said.

All heads were now turned toward Jerry Potts for a full interpretation of what must surely be a most interesting and complete statement. Colonel Herchmer again inquired of him what the Indian had said. Jerry Potts hesitated a moment, and then replied: "He said 'Grub.'" That sentence was the concrete analysis of the speech, so far as our blase friend was concerned, and no other translation was ever produced, so far as I know.

The distance covered on this trip by men who started from Qu'Appelle, went the entire way and back to their post again, was quite considerable. We figured that it was approximately 2,000 miles, a great many of the horses covering the full trip also.

A young companion of mine, named Jack Leader, who was an excellent marksman with a shotgun, was one of the escort, and was selected to accompany the Marquis on many little side trips taken en route for the sake of small game. Standing by the Marquis, Jack Leader rarely failed to bring to the ground any bird missed by the former. I have recently been very much interested to learn that my former young friend, who is now known as old Jack Leader, filled the same post of trust near His Royal Highness the Prince of Wales on his recent trip through the Canadian West.

I was at one time making a trip from Qu'Appelle to File Hills, and from there to Touchwood Hills, accompanied by Jack Leader, acting as escort to the Indian agent making treaty payments. We traveled in a buckboard, Leader always carrying a shotgun as well as his rifle and revolver. I had my sporting rifle, together with my other arms, neither of us being permitted to fire Government ammunition merely for sport.

The distance from File Hills to Touchwood Hills was 52 miles. This was considered a pretty good day's work for a team, and, as we intended

to do this in one day, we agreed not to make any stops for the purpose of going after game—we would content ourselves with shooting only that which could be reached by our shots from the buckboard, Leader shooting at short range with his gun, and I trying to reach any other game with my rifle.

Our intention was to secure game that we could exchange for fresh meat at the Indian reserve, which was under the supervision of McConnell, a former member of the force. We secured exactly 52 pieces—ducks, prairie chickens and rabbits—one piece for every mile. This will show you how abundant the game was in those days of blissful happiness. As a rule, we refrained from shooting anything except for food, but sometimes we did shoot just for sport.

I remember once, when, early in the spring (the ice on one of the seven Qu'Appelle lakes not yet having melted, and being covered with about eight inches of water), a large flock of pelicans passed over the barracks. I ran for my sporting rifle, and fired at one of the flock, which I succeeded only in wounding. The bird described an immense circle and finally alighted about one-eighth of a mile away on the lake. I started out to secure him. The water-covered ice was more slippery than ever, and I had serious trouble reaching the bird, which I did not wish to shoot again at such close range. On my approach, it rose up on its legs and made a plunge at me with its huge beak. I was



N. W. M. POLICE POST IN THE ROCKY MOUNTAINS NEAR BANFF, IN 1884.
The man lying down was Sergt. Wild, 6 feet 3 inches tall, who was later killed by an Indian,
whom he was attempting to arrest on a charge of murder.



forced to battle with it with the butt end of my rifle before I could lay my hands on it. This bird was of extreme dimensions, and when carried by the feet over my shoulder its tail feathers dragged in the water. An old Indian woman skinned it for me for the sake of the carcass, which she would eat, and I protected and safeguarded the skin by rubbing into it arsenic secured from the hospital.

When hung up on the wall, the skin measured eight feet from tip to tip of wing, and six feet six inches from back to end of tail. I presented it later to a member of the force whose uncle was the Government naturalist at the museum in Ottawa. It was to be preserved, and labeled with a recital of the incident—that is, when, where, and by whom shot.

A few years ago, when on a trip to Ottawa with my wife, I went to the museum to show her the bird I had shot thirty years before. Unfortunately, however, the museum had just been moved to a new, magnificent building, and all the specimens were still cased up. We were unable, on this account, to see if it were there.

White men's customs and habits, be they good or bad, are readily copied and imitated by almost all aborigines, and our Western Indians were no exception to the rule. They learned very soon, for instance, of New Year's calls among the whites, and this custom they proceeded to imitate. They were always highly pleased when any of the red-coated ones called on them. This was done,

usually, with the diplomatic idea of keeping up the good feeling existing between the Indians and the police.

One day one of my young friends and I conceived the idea of making such a New Year's call upon several Indians at a Cree camp. I reminded my companion, just before entering one of the tepees, that if our call was welcome we were likely to be offered food of some sort, and I cautioned him not to make the mistake of refusing it, as that would be a positive insult to our host. Being thus well posted on the proper Indian etiquette, we entered boldly, and, as expected, we were well received by an Indian, his wife and daughter. The latter had an iron pot in the center of the tepee, filled with some stew, which seemed to them to be the proper article for this state occasion. We were both offered a plate of it, and, as previously agreed, we proceeded to eat, perhaps in a more gingerly manner than our host, but making the best show possible without exciting our friends' suspicions.

Our call at an end, we left by the usual porthole of the tepee, when I remarked to my friend, "That was not bad stew, was it? I wonder what it was." "No," said he, "it was quite tasty. I presume it was rabbit." While asking the question, however, having suspicions of my own, my eyes had made a quick survey of the tepee surroundings. I replied to my friend that he was wrong, that the unused portion of the stew was still hanging up on the

tripod at the back of the tepee, a good-sized half carcass of an Indian dog, something midway between a wolf and an Esquimo dog. My friend's quick eye verified the truth of my discovery and statement, and his stomach immediately verified my thought as to what impressions and tribulations his mind was undergoing. Strange to say, however, it did not affect me that way, perhaps on account of the fact that I had almost discounted the possibility beforehand.

CHAPTER XII

AS stated at the beginning of these pages, my object is to give a vivid idea to my readers of the everyday life and the general details of a Mounted Policeman's duties; and, with this in view, I do not hesitate to relate a great many incidents which may seem commonplace of themselves, but which I hope will, as a whole, give the proper picture. Our work was so varied and so unexpected at times that no order, whether of moment and serious, or at times light and even ludicrous, ever surprised any of us.

I was told, for instance, to go and get a crazy man who was roaming in the File Hills, some twenty miles away. No further information was given—neither name, location, nor other details. This man might have been a giant, it might have required a dozen men to subdue him in a paroxysm of insanity; but such trivial details never seemed to occur to the minds of the officers in command.

I started out in a buckboard having seating capacity for two, taking with me, in case of need, a pair of shackles and a pair of handcuffs, not stop-



Fort Watson, Cypress Hills.

On the dividing line between Alberta and Saskatchewan. Formerly the headquarters of the N. W. M. Police force from 1875 to 1881. This fort is now out of existence, having been destroyed owing to the appearance of "Mountain Fever" in the locality.

ping to think how these were to be put on my man. It was a case of catching the rat first.

Arriving at File Hills, I inquired of every Indian or half-breed that I met if he knew or had seen a crazy man. I was sent from pillar to post, until I finally located my quarry by mere good luck. I found the man, one and a half times my size, wild-eyed, but apparently docile enough. I entered into a friendly conversation with my new-found chum. I remarked on the beauty of the weather, and such topics likely to awaken his admiration for Mother Nature. I then suggested that we might go for a ride, and he agreed. As he took his seat, I pulled out the shackles and handcuffs, and asked him if he knew what these were for. He replied in the negative, and I told him I would show him.

That was a case when the hand needed to be quicker than the eye; and, swiftly passing the shackles under the foot bar of the buckboard, my man was secured by the feet. I repeated the operation by passing the chain of the handcuffs around the iron seat guard on his side, and over his wrists, as a demonstration of what we did when we arrested any one. I jumped immediately to my seat, taking care to shift my revolver to the side farthest from my neighbor. I then started a conversation which was entirely one-sided, and which I continued during the entire trip, in the hope of preventing my friend's docile temperament turning into a belligerent one.

new post looked. I, in turn, was asked by Inspector Steele if I could furnish a sketch—cameras or kodaks being unknown in our neighborhood. I replied that I would try, and, taking an ordinary pencil, and stretching myself on top of a hill, I drew what I believe to be the first picture made of the Qu'Appelle Valley. It was a crude and amateurish affair, but it found its way to the archives of the Government. I made a duplicate of it for my friend Captain Duchesnay, who sent it to his mother, a well-to-do lady residing at Manoir, near Quebec. She very kindly had photographic copies made, and sent one down to her son. He gave me half a dozen of these, which I distributed to my family, and I am happy to have one copy today, which I have had reproduced, and which is included among the illustrations of this book.

CHAPTER XIII

IT was intense Winter when Inspector Steele, his flunkey (or valet), named Bob Mackey, a half-breed interpreter named Isbister, with myself as cook and secretary, started on a tour of all the reserves in the Qu'Appelle district.

The object of our trip was to secure definite information on a subject of an international character, which, strange as it may seem to my reader, I feel that I am not at liberty to divulge even now. Suffice to say that it involved the rectification of some wrong, and for that purpose I had to take down in writing, verbatim, the depositions of Indians and half-breeds, wherever found. The cold being so intense, I was compelled to carry the necessary ink in a hard-rubber bottle, which at all times when not in use I kept in my clothes, very near my body, so as to prevent the ink from freezing and becoming useless.

We selected the File Hills as our first place of investigation. Our mission seemed to have received a rather broad interpretation on the part of

the Indians, and we were looked upon as the great "Misters Fix-it." We had come to rectify all wrongs, no matter what their nature, and it was through this misunderstanding that a young swain buck came to us to have his love affair straightened out.

It seemed that the young lady in the case had changed her mind—the privilege of her sex—and had discarded her admirer without any attempt at returning his wooing gifts. Inspector Steele, who possessed a sense of humor at all times, saw in the occasion an interesting half hour, and instructed me to take down the evidence, which the young man proceeded to relate with all the earnestness of a witness in a capital case. It was hard work to keep our faces straight at times, but we managed it. Inspector Steele suggested to our deponent that it would be proper for us to hear the other side as well, and instructed him to bring his lady love into our presence. The latter readily appeared; and, after hearing her evidence, which tallied in most particulars with the first, and the further information that she loved some one else better, Inspector Steele intimated that, such being the case, it was customary among white people to return all the gifts.

The young woman agreed to this, and said she would do likewise. She then proceeded to lay before us a small looking-glass about an inch and a half square, a couple of brass rings covered with verdigris, a strip of red ribbon, and one or two

other items, the whole of a value of about five cents. Both the lovers expressed their entire satisfaction at the result, and peace reigned once more in the family.

From here we went to Touchwood Hills. This was a trip across country, where there was no trail. As a matter of fact, there was about a foot of snow most of the way. We secured the services of an Indian chief guide named Star Blanket. Although the thermometer was registering thirty-five degrees below zero, this Indian wore only a cotton shirt, a pair of gaiters (or trousers without seat) of the same material, a pair of cotton socks, moccasins, and a loose blanket over all. We advised him to get on top of our loaded wagon, which he did. We had not gone three miles, however, when he complained of being cold, and said he preferred running afoot, as in so doing he would keep warm. He started ahead, and kept going all day at a jog trot.

The air was misty, with a light, fluffy snow, and the sun was obscure. Once in a while, however, we saw a "sun dog." This is a winter phenomenon common in the North, which causes an illuminated spot to appear at a different angle than the sun, and has been the means of many a traveler losing his bearings.

It seemed to us that our guide was gradually turning eastward; but, trusting to his knowledge, we followed him blindly. At the end of the day, however, he admitted to us that he was lost, and

did not know where he was. We were rather incensed, and told him he could go back in the morning. We gave him a supply of hardtack, and he started to follow the trail that we had made, and eventually reached his camp.

We then had recourse to our compasses, and laid our course to the northwest, where we hoped to find Touchwood Hills. We had taken but one day's provisions, and found ourselves compelled to crush and keep the few hardtack we had to feed our horses. Rice in a very small quantity was all we had left. We economized by each eating only one-half a cup a day. This lasted for two days, and the following two days we had nothing but "wind pudding." At last, however, we found a trail which led us to a way station kept by a half-breed. We were famished, and were all anxious to put in a substantial meal as soon as it could be prepared. I was as hungry as any one of the party, but having had a previous experience of the same sort, I warned my young friend Bob Mackey to be careful and to eat but one bite at first, masticating it carefully and then swallowing it before eating more. He would have none of this. He was going to eat everything in sight, and that as quickly as he could—and he did. The result was that inside of fifteen minutes we had a very sick man on our hands, and for a time we feared we should lose him. Happily, he weathered the ordeal.

We were to have further trials on this trip. We

left Touchwood Hills at about 4 o'clock P. M., so as to reach the edge of the Big Salt Plain, which is about fifty miles wide, and be ready to cross this in the morning. We arrived at our camping place at about 7 P. M., but just as we did we broke one of our sleighs or jumpers. It could not be repaired, so the interpreter, Isbister, and myself were instructed to leave at 2 A. M. and go back on our trail until we reached a Touchwood Hills settlement, where we had noticed a double sleigh.

At this ungodly hour, and in absolute darkness, we started with one horse. Turn about, Isbister and I would walk in front of the horse, so as to feel rather than see the trail, while the other rode. We had put the harness collar on the horse, so as to be able to harness him to the sleigh when we found it. We finally located the article, but were informed by the half-breed owner, whom we had roused from a sound sleep, that he had no desire to sell the sleigh. We told him that nevertheless we were going to take it, and we left him a blank voucher, some of which we always carried with us, and instructed him to fill in the price and collect at the police station in Qu'Appelle upon his first visit.

We returned to camp at 7 A. M. After taking time to eat a substantial breakfast, we started across the plain. We walked and ran the entire distance beside our sleighs, and arrived about 7 P. M. on the other edge, where wood could be secured for a camp fire. We camped

there that night, and the next morning left for Qu'Appelle.

We had not gone very far when we noticed, at some distance, two separate teams, each repeatedly describing a large circle. We approached them and found that their drivers, two settlers coming into the country, were almost frozen. The thermometer was then about fifty degrees below zero. The men were absolutely incapable of driving their horses, and the animals, of their own account, had been going in the circles that we had noticed. We took charge of them and brought them back to Fort Qu'Appelle, where they were treated and revived at the hospital.

We had all lost weight on this trip, but not so on the next, which we undertook about a week afterward. This time we started for Moose Mountain, distant about eighty miles in a south-westerly direction from Fort Qu'Appelle. Having had our experience on the last trip, I was instructed by Inspector Steele to take double rations this time, as we did not intend to starve again. I provided for this, and the same quartet started out once more, with the thermometer at thirty-five degrees below zero.

The weather was clear, and we had a fair amount of snow on the ground, so that traveling was comparatively easy. At night we would put up a small tent, in the middle of which we set up a tin stove, which made it fairly comfortable—that is, provided we kept all our clothing on, in-

cluding our short buffalo overcoats. I remember how we used to sit tailor-fashion around that stove, and in turn Inspector Steele and the rest of us would swap yarns; and I can assure you that Inspector Steele was as good a fellow traveler as anyone could ever wish to have. Although a strict disciplinarian when occasion demanded it, he could be "one of the boys," too, when the time was ripe for it.

We were on our way to the Indian reserve, and on the last morning we still had about twelve miles to go. The morning was a real biting one, every branch of the underbrush and everything else in sight being covered with frost. It was customary for one of us, in our turn, to go out early, before our party actually made a start, and skirmish around with the idea of finding the best direction.

This morning it was my turn; and, knowing that we had only a few more miles to go, I thought it advisable to relieve myself of the weight of my heavy revolver and belt of ammunition, which I strapped to my jumper, where I already had my carbine. Thus lightened, I started ahead to locate a road.

About three or four hundred yards from the camp, which was hidden from my sight through the underbush, I came upon a small lake—frozen, of course. This I started to cross, when my attention was attracted to a mound, almost in the middle. The excrescence on the smooth ice was

unusual, and my curiosity, together with the idea that perhaps it was someone who was lost and was freezing to death, drew me in that direction. When about twenty-five feet from the mound, which was all covered with snow, I noticed a regular, up-and-down heaving, denoting that there was life underneath. I was sure that I had found a human being—nothing else was in my mind. But for one instant only! The thumping of my moc-casins on the ice had suddenly awakened an immense wolf, with a head on him which to me seemed, at that moment, the size of a lion's. Even the animal was startled, and showed it with staring eyes and open mouth. I was more than startled—I realized in the fraction of a second that I was unarmed!

There was no time to spare to figure out what, according to Hoyle, was the best thing to do in the circumstances. Quick as a flash I spread my arms as wide as I could, and yelling like a Comanche I dashed toward the foe. It worked! The wolf turned tail and ran, and so did I—in the opposite direction, until I reached my belt and revolver, which I buckled on, vowing never again to take any chances.

When nearing our destination we were surprised to notice that a beautiful deer, with very broad antlers, had been following us for at least two miles, at a distance of not more than one hundred yards. Suddenly, however, it took fright, and started away from us in the opposite direc-

tion. It seemed to bound ten feet into the air at each leap, and disappeared from our sight in less than three minutes. We might have shot the animal a dozen times, but it was not our policy to destroy game when it was not necessary.

Upon our arrival at the reserve we proceeded to take the usual evidence, and in the course of so doing I came to the hut of an old French half-breed, who proved to be one hundred and four years of age. He did not wear glasses and seemed to possess all of his faculties in good form. I tested his memory and the accuracy of his age by having him relate to me his early history, when he had helped build some of the extreme Northerly posts of the Hudson's Bay Company. The fact that I wore the red uniform, but nevertheless could speak his language, seemed to appeal to him greatly; and, through this, I was able to secure from him some valuable information in regard to the early history of the land.

When we left to return to Fort Qu'Appelle the thermometer was still hovering between thirty-five and fifty-two degrees below zero, as it had been during the whole trip. Owing to the glare of the sun on the snow we were compelled to blacken our eyes with charcoal, in order to prevent snow-blindness, a very annoying and painful affliction, which may last three or four weeks. As a rule we were provided with either colored or smoked goggles for just such emergencies; but in the extreme cold we found that the metallic rims

of the glasses were likely to freeze to our faces, and for this reason we preferred the use of the charcoal from the camp fires, which was just as effective.

Another thing which seemed simple enough, but which was always important to know on these trips, was how to melt snow to make tea. Almost everyone will say: "Why, anyone can do that." But it is not so, as some of us learned from experience. We found that by heating a kettle or tin pail red hot, and putting the snow in, the snow immediately became smoked, and the resultant water was as bitter as creosote, and unfit to drink. Gentle heat only should be applied to the bottom of the pail, the snow having first been placed in it. As long as water covers the bottom, you may apply as much heat as you will, but not before.

This trip had been a very cold one, all the way; but this did not seem to hurt us very much. As a matter of fact, I gained ten pounds on the trip, which lasted three weeks.

CHAPTER XIV

IT was not long after this that I was promoted to the rank of Corporal, but I still continued to fulfill the duties of Clerk of the Court.

Colonel Richardson, one of the three stipendiary magistrates of the Territories, held court here and there, travelling almost all of the time. This brought him around to Fort Qu'Appelle about once every three months.

From the fact that I kept the court records, many of the would-be litigants, mainly half-breeds, looked upon me more or less as a legal man and sought my advice as such. In nearly every case, my advice to them was to settle out of court. This was so well followed that at one time—when I had, I believe, seventeen cases on the calendar—I managed to clear every one of them within ten minutes of court opening time. I scurried around and found an old pair of white cotton gloves, which I presented to Colonel Richardson at the opening of the court, stating that I knew that such was a custom in the East when-

ever a magistrate had a blank calendar, only that the gloves should be kid instead of cotton. The jovial, short old Colonel seemed very much amused and pleased at the incident.

Surveying parties of the Canadian Pacific Railway were quite numerous in our neighborhood at that time, and most of them were on very friendly and intimate terms with the Mounted Police, from whom they had received help on many occasions. With the possible idea of repaying something in kind, one of these men gave some confidential information to Inspector Steele, hoping thereby to secure some benefit from it.

Inspector Steele sent for Sergeant Johnson and myself and imparted his knowledge to us. After proper consultation, Johnson and I left at 5 P. M. with a wagon, carrying a couple of axes, some logging chains and a few provisions. We were ostensibly going to Fort Ellice on a special errand. As a matter of fact, however, we were going thirty-five miles down the Qu'Appelle Valley to Ross'. We were to leave there at about 2 A. M., go about three miles farther, then suddenly leave the valley, go over the plateau south of it, and down the next valley at a place which had been surveyed, and which was to be known shortly after as Wolsey, a station on the Canadian Pacific Railway.

We did as directed, and as soon as we reached the edge of the woods my friend Johnson started to chop down trees. As fast as I would locate the

necessary quarter section, he would haul the trees onto the ground, thus securing for us, with the first improvement, the right to enter this homestead at the land office, whenever the latter opened. We managed so to locate about one dozen quarter sections—and this in a snowstorm, which necessitated the use of the compass to find our camp at dusk. We were dumbfounded to find that, suspicious of our movements, quite a number of other people had kept an eye on us as soon as they discovered our errand, and they began to locate the land as well as ourselves.

We returned to Fort Qu'Appelle after three or four days, and were just in time to hear read to us, as well as to all other members of the force, an order issued from headquarters in accordance with instructions from Sir John A. MacDonald, the Prime Minister, to the effect that no member of the police force would be allowed to enter a homestead. This order has rankled in my soul ever since; and even after the thirty-seven years which have elapsed, I still cannot but protest against the palpable injustice of it. Men who had given up all pleasures of civilization, who had undergone all the hardships of pioneering life in a country devoid of all luxuries, who had endured the miseries and dangers of Winter trips as well as dangers of other kinds, for the purpose of making the country safe and secure for the settler and immigrant, were themselves denied the privilege granted to any stranger.





CHEYENNE INDIAN CAMP NEAR MEDICINE HAT.

[From a photograph taken in 1882. This is a typical home or teepee, such as was to be found by the thousand on the plains at that date. When moving, the Indians would pack their skin teepees on the travell or poles crossed over their ponies' backs.]



Within recent years I read with satisfaction of a measure presented before Parliament by Representative Martin—now, I believe, the Provincial Prime Minister at Regina—which had for its purpose the recognition of the services of the early members of the Mounted Police force. Nothing, however, seems to have come of it. In any case, I believe there is but a handful of these men left.

Doctor Holmes, a staff sergeant in charge of the hospital, was at this time called to Fort McLeod, to give his evidence against a Blackfoot Indian, who was shortly to be put on trial for the murder of Constable Grayburn—Holmes having been the doctor who had performed the post mortem on Grayburn at the time of his murder at Fort Walsh. This meant that the trip to McLeod, a distance of five hundred miles, would leave the entire contingent at Fort Qu'Appelle without a medical attendant.

Inspector Steele asked me to take charge in the interval. This I agreed to do, provided I was not requested to administer medicine. I might advise anyone in case of need, but I would have been afraid to give him even a glass of water for fear that I should be blamed for any ill results. Every morning, at sick call, all those who did not feel just right would parade for medical inspection. Without being a medical man, I had had enough experience to be able to class my patients for duty or otherwise. A look into their eyes, a look at their tongues, a feel of the pulse and a

test of the temperature were quite sufficient to tell me whether the case was real or feigned sickness.

It happened that one man, named Haines, came once too often for his own good. I had given him the benefit of the doubt once or twice; but this time I was quite positive of my diagnosis, and I informed Inspector Steele that the next morning I was going to cure this man with medicine. He said to me, "What is the matter with him?" I said, "Lazy." "All right," said he, "I don't care what you do to him." The following morning I dismissed everyone but him. I questioned him minutely and then gave him a concoction which he at first declined to take, saying he had just partaken of his breakfast. I insisted, however, on his taking it, with the alternative of going to the guard house for feigned sickness. He took the medicine—and he never came near the hospital again. For two or three days he was very active. It certainly put new vigor into him.

Strange to say, I was the only man who was taken down seriously ill. I developed an abscess near my throat, and was threatened with blood poisoning, when it happened that a young doctor, who had just come to the country to settle, passed near Qu'Appelle. He was sent for, and upon his arrival he applied the knife immediately. The relief was instant, but the muscles of my jaws had become so rigid that for six weeks I was unable to open my mouth, even wide enough to put the blade of a knife between my teeth. I was reduced



to a diet of cocoa and bouillon for almost two months. However, I fully recovered in due time, and was able to perform two or three operations, serious enough, on some of the men, one upon an Indian prisoner, and even one upon one of our horses. Doctor Holmes was away fully a year. Meanwhile, we retained this new young doctor, who finally located at Qu'Appelle for good.

CHAPTER XV

THE Canadian Pacific Railway was now south of us, and had gone even a little farther west, when we received orders to remove the entire division to a place on the prairie about thirty-five miles northwest of Qu'Appelle. The last vestige of even a small tree was about ten miles west of Qu'Appelle, so that, when we arrived at the spot indicated, there was nothing but the bare, level prairie and a few tents erected here and there. There was not a drop of water in sight, but there was the dry bed of an old creek known as Waskanna, or Pile-Of-Bones creek. This place was indeed one of the dreariest I had ever lived in, and we were all more than astonished when told that it was to be the capital, and had been christened Regina, by Her Royal Highness, Princess Louise, wife of the Governor-General.

We had hardly arrived at the place when portable buildings, sixteen by forty-eight feet, one and one-half stories in height, were unloaded from



OFFICERS OF THE NORTHWEST MOUNTED POLICE
at Fort Walsh, Cypress Hills, Sask.

[From a photograph taken in 1880. Standing is Inspector S. B. Steele, who later commanded the Strathcona Horse in the Boer War, and, later still, became a major-general in the Canadian Army and had command of a district in England during the World War. He died of natural causes in January, 1919, in England—having, by his merit, received the honors indicated by "C. B." and "M. V. O." Sitting, left to right: Surgeon Kennedy, Major Crozier, Inspector Dickens (son of the great novelist), and Major John Cotton.]

freight cars which had come from Ottawa. These were to be our quarters, and we proceeded at once to erect them. As soon as the first one was partly up, I ordered the workmen to put in the windows at each end of the upper story. When this was done, I removed to the upper story all of the papers and documents of the office which was in my charge—said office, up to that time, having been under a marquee tent. I installed myself in the place with my cot, and thus I secured the honor of being the first man who slept under a solid roof in what is today one of the prettiest and best cities of the Canadian West and the capital of Saskatchewan. This building was still standing three years ago and was the second from the guard room where Riel was incarcerated, awaiting his execution.

We had been in Regina a few months when word was received from Qu'Appelle station, on the C. P. R., that an old settler had been found murdered, and the police dragnet was immediately spread to apprehend the murderer. Nothing but robbery could have been the motive, and we worked on this theory, with the result that a young renegade Indian, who usually masqueraded as a half-breed, under the name of Johnson, was arrested and brought to Regina for preliminary examination and commitment.

His entire family, which bore an unsavory reputation, was present at court. As Clerk of the Court, I took down the deposition in long hand,

stenographers being an unknown luxury in our neighborhood at that time. Colonel Herchmer presided as Justice of the Peace. While the prisoner's brother, a larger man than he, was testifying, I noticed by the glaring light of a sun ray shining on his trousers that these seemed smeared with a brownish tint. It looked like blood to me, and I was so impressed that I communicated my suspicion to the presiding officer, who told me to place this man under arrest as soon as he had finished giving his evidence. I did so and placed both brothers in the guard house in separate cells.

They remained there for some months, when they were eventually tried by Colonel Richardson and a jury, which returned a verdict of guilty, in each case. They were sentenced to be executed by hanging. They both denied their guilt almost to the last, apparently not being convinced that the sentence was to be carried out. In despair, an old missionary, who had tried in vain for the men's conversion, begged the officer in command at Regina to have these men's coffins brought in front of their cells so as to convince them. This was done, and the men then confessed that together they had murdered the poor old soul for his money, which after all they had not secured, for the sum of \$110 was found on the body, sewed up on the inside of the undershirt. This was later delivered to the old settler's relatives from Eastern Canada. These men paid the penalty, and were, so far as I know, the first to be legally executed in the Territory.

It had been the custom to pay the men of the force by means of Government checks. In many cases this meant that checks of ridiculous amounts were sometimes drawn, as the small salary of a constable was often reduced through different charges, such as extra supplies, or fines, etc. In some instances, through necessity caused by red tape, checks for one, two or three cents had to be drawn. Men receiving such checks would very often frame them as curiosities, and two or three years afterwards a request would come from Ottawa asking us to have these checks presented for payment. They might as well have asked for the moon in a pail of water.

I suggested that a single check be drawn to cover the entire monthly salaries, and the cash secured from one of the banks which had now been established in Regina. The Government consented to this, and thereafter each month I would mount my horse and, fully armed, I would ride to the bank with a leather pouch to secure the currency. I always took good care when returning to select a new route each time. This worked very well until a few months after I had left Regina, when the customary courier forgot the route one day and started instead for the international boundary. I am not aware whether this defaulter was ever arrested or not.

A newspaper called "The Regina Leader," the first one in the place, was started by Nicholas Flood Davin, a florid, white-haired man of excep-

tional ability and forceful temperament. From the very start it was successful. The paper is still in existence, and its home is now a beautiful building in the heart of the city. I was privileged to call there three years ago, when I had an interview with the present editor.

Davin made it a point to look after the welfare of Regina, and among the undesirable things he uncovered and brought to the public notice was the fact that liquor was allowed in the city. Upon this coming to the attention of the authorities in Ottawa, Colonel Herchmer received a dispatch advising him to have the traffic stopped immediately. I was at that time in charge of the division office, and therefore not subject to ordinary duties; but I was requested by the Colonel to go down to the town and take charge, and stop the whiskey traffic.

There was only one line of telephone in the country at that time, and that ran from the mounted police headquarters to the police station in Regina, a distance of three miles. I proceeded downtown, where I took charge, having two constables with me—one named Asprey and the other named Brinner. I had been there just fifteen days when I inquired from Asprey if he could get me a bottle of whiskey. He said he could and he did. I then inquired who had supplied him, and he named a friend of his. I sent for this man and secured from him the name of the man who had supplied him, and in turn secured the names of fifteen in all. These I placed under arrest, with the exception

of the first one. I then telephoned to Colonel Herchmer for a four-in-hand wagon, and when I told him it was for fifteen prisoners he simply gasped, and thought there must have been a riot.

The prisoners pleaded guilty, and all paid the usual fine of \$200 each—in one case, \$400 for a second offense. This ended liquor in Regina for some time.

CHAPTER XVI

I HAD the supervision of several stations along the Canadian Pacific Railway running from Broadview to Moose Jaw. The road, by this time, had reached the Rockies, and trouble cropped up now and then among the constructing forces. This time trouble had broken out at Moose Jaw among the operating and constructing forces, and the superintendent of the division had telegraphed to Mounted Police headquarters, stating that, if he could steal away with a locomotive and one car, he would do so, and requested us to have a force in readiness.

I had become a sergeant, although I was then only twenty-three years of age, and as such was told to select thirty-five men of my own choice and be ready for action. I selected the biggest men we had, so as to make the best impression; and, the car having arrived, we boarded it for Moose Jaw.

We arrived there at about nine P. M., and before crossing a wooden bridge near the station we

examined carefully all the woodwork, to make sure that none of the timbers had been cut. Upon arriving at the station, we found about 400 men, who were intent on stopping what they thought was a mail train. Their astonishment was unbounded when they saw our men emerge with revolvers and Winchesters, ready for business. I issued an order, which I signed, and which the superintendent of the Canadian Pacific Railway division had countersigned, to the effect that no one would be allowed on the grounds of the Canadian Pacific Railway. My men, therefore, proceeded to clear the premises with loaded carbines in hand.

For the next fifteen days we had some trouble, such as engines being thrown off the switch; soap put in the water of the tank, resulting in foam instead of steam coming out; eccentrics disconnected, and other minor troubles. Eventually, however, the disturbing element died out, and things became normal again.

Our men took charge of some of the mail trains and ran them from Winnipeg clear to the Rockies. It was strange, but our force seemed to possess men who could do almost anything when the occasion demanded it.

It was about a year after this time, when calling on my friend Captain Duchesnay, that I was introduced to a gentleman who said that he had met me before. I stated that he had the advantage of me. "Well," he said, "I met you last



COMMANDING OFFICER'S QUARTERS
at Fort McLeod, Alberta, from a photograph taken in 1884.

Superintendent Shields immediately that he had the wrong man, and that my nature would revolt against such work. I got off his car at Medicine Hat, and there I called on Sergeant Percy, an old friend in charge of that post. Percy urged me to think the matter over, saying that I ought to remain with the force at least another year. This I finally agreed to do, provided that Colonel Irving, who was then the Commissioner of the force, would allow me to retain my rank, and with the understanding that I should be stationed at Fort McLeod, which was considered the most desirable post in the country.

I telegraphed to Colonel Irving, stating these facts, with a request for a prompt answer. There was a train due for the East within two hours, and this I intended to take if his answer were unfavorable. Within one hour I received a reply reading: "Report at Fort McLeod; this will be your authority." Accordingly, I started on the next Western train for Calgary on my way to McLeod. Upon arriving at Calgary, I met Captain Cotton, the officer in command at McLeod, and showed him my telegram. I also met Inspector Steele, who was on his way to the end of the Canadian Pacific Railway line in the Rockies, and who wanted me to go with him. He tried to induce me to telegraph again to Colonel Irving, requesting authority to join Steele. This I declined to do, as it might have reflected on me in an unfavorable way. Captain Cotton and In-

the exhibition at the proper time. I was right in my surmise.

As soon as I put my left foot in the stirrup, my beautiful horse went up in the air, ready to fall backwards. I swung to the right, and alighted as he came down. By this time twenty-five heads came out from different corners where they were watching. I proceeded to make much of the animal. I petted him and fed him some sugar, and again prepared to mount. I realized that he was extremely sensitive in the mouth, and took care not to jerk him on the bit. This time he was a little more resigned, and he walked away from the fort gently enough. He had gone hardly one hundred yards, however, when he took the bit and bolted.

I had spurs on, and a whip in hand, and I made up my mind that I could go as far as he could, so I let him run for fully ten miles, when he began to show signs of letting up. Now was my time to give him a lesson, and I plied the whip, and later the spurs, bringing him back to the fort one mass of foam, and nearly exhausted. I repeated this operation about three or four days in succession, when my horse, Chester, gave it up as a bad job, and from that time on he became one of the greatest pets at the fort. There was quite a scramble as to who should get him, when I left Fort McLeod a year after.

Fort McLeod had formerly been built at the bottom of the valley, with the Old Man's River running on one side. One fine morning, however,

owing to a rise in the river, the latter changed its course, and was now running on both sides of the fort. Fearing the possibility of being washed away altogether, the authorities decided to abandon the old place and built new quarters on the edge of the plateau, overlooking the valley on one side. This was one of the first police posts that was built without a stockade around it.

We had here two nine-pounder field pieces, and one day we thought it might be advisable to demonstrate our ability with these to the Black-foot Indians, just for the moral effect. Accordingly, we sent them notice that, on a given date, we were going to shoot the big guns.

This news drew the Indians to the spot. Sergeant Spicer, Sergeant O'Connor and myself were to shoot three or four rounds each, and we tossed up a penny to see who should have the first shot. Spicer won. Right across the valley stood a lone, dead tree, midway up the bank. This tree had a large trunk, and Spicer decided that it would be an excellent target for a common shell which would explode on contact—as, in the case of a miss, it would in any event raise an immense cloud of earth, and that would carry some mental effect with it. He aimed carefully and fired. It was one shot in a hundred. He had cut the fork branch, and raised an enormous amount of earth. We rang down the curtain. The strongest impression had been made, and we would not spoil it with a second shot. The Indians went home wondering.

CHAPTER XVII

THE dry season of the Summer was one which always carried with it the danger of prairie fires. Sometimes these were caused by careless campers, sometimes by lightning. In any event, when smoke appeared in the distance an investigation was always in order.

One night, at about eleven o'clock, the alarm was sounded, and within ten minutes about twenty men were at a gallop towards the flames, southwest of McLeod, each man having a gunny sack or bacon bag in hand, which was to be thoroughly soaked in water in the first pond on the way. The flames, which at night seemed to be some two or three miles away, proved to be fully twenty miles off. The prairie was being burnt up in strips. Our men dismounted, and, leaving their horses in charge of one man, started to beat out the fire.

In case the wind changed, the alarm was to be sounded, when everybody was to run for his horse. The wind did turn. It meant that the long grass would catch fire, and would become very danger-

many years has been, the Commissioner of the Force. Mrs. Perry prepared bouillon, jellies and other delicacies which she thought might appeal to me, and I have felt indebted to her ever since.

I had hardly recovered, and was still somewhat wobbly, when Inspector Perry, together with Mr. Gault of Ottawa, suggested that I accompany them to the Crow's Nest Pass, where they were going for a short shooting excursion. This, they said, would help me. In a very short time I was ready, bag and baggage. We traveled by wagon to the entrance of the Rockies. In passing through the foot-hills we would at one minute feel the extreme heat, and within the next few moments we would get the cold draft from the mountain snow—this alternating all the way to the head of the Old Man's River, where we camped.

The water of the river came from under a ledge, and leaped down some fifty or sixty feet, like a sheet of crystal. Through thousands of years it had dug a basin thirty to forty feet deep in the solid rock, from which the water overflowed and ran down the side of the mountain, about one foot deep, cold and clear, and full of beautiful speckled trout. These fishes congregated in the basin by the hundreds, but we failed to attract any to our flies, either through the fact that the latter were not the right kind, or because of our own clumsiness. When in need of a mess, we simply used our shot guns and fired into the lot, generally securing enough in this way.

men, half breeds and Indians was confined. A sergeant, as usual, was in charge, with a proper guard under him. While I was performing this duty, one day, an Indian prisoner communicated to me the fact that everything was not quite right among the prisoners. I reported the matter to the commanding officer, with a request for an extra guard, for the purpose of searching prisoners and cells.

It was fortunate that I did this, for I found that almost every prisoner had something in his possession which might have proved very dangerous in a concerted move, and this was evidently what was intended.

Prior to the search, I locked up every one of the prisoners. Then, taking them one by one, I had them remove all their clothing and put on new ones. In one instance, a young fellow known as "the kid" had nothing left but his stockings, when he remarked: "I suppose you want me to take these off." I said "Yes"; and, as he took them off, out dropped a knife all nicked like a saw.

I found garrotting strings, red pepper, an old razor, sharp pointed nails, and other things of the same description. Every cell was ransacked and every mattress emptied. The offenders were all punished by being put on bread and water for a period, and a few days later I let my Indian informant go free.

It was not long after this, that a former member of the force, a man named Pennock, with

CHAPTER XVIII

EARLY in the Spring of 1885 an old Indian woman, camped about five miles from McLeod, gave the information to some cowboy that she had received news, through Indian channels, of a battle which had taken place 'way up North the day before, between the Indians and the Mounted Police.

This information was brought in but nothing was thought of it, until a courier from Calgary arrived with an official dispatch stating that the Indians and half-breeds had broken loose at Duck Lake, and with a warning to be on the lookout for an outbreak among the Blackfeet. The method of quick communication among the Indians has always remained more or less of a mystery, although we know that they used smoke and looking glasses for this purpose.

There were then about forty men at McLeod, and there were about 5,000 Indians around us. Plans were at once devised for a defense in case of need. Rifle pits were dug around our quarters

stated that I did not wish this, but in view of the Indian rebellion I was not going to leave the country until the thing was over. After that, however, I was going to cut my bridges after me, as I had no desire to live any longer away from civilization, and I certainly had no desire to die away from it.

Daily news came to us through a system of mounted couriers between McLeod and Calgary, and it was not very long after that that the news came of the capture of Riel, the leader of the rebellion. This we considered was the end of all trouble, and in time it proved so.

I then decided to leave for the East. A young man, Mr. Paton of Cherbrook, was going East also, so we left McLeod together, armed to the teeth, as we did not even then feel quite secure in regard to the Blackfeet. We traveled in a mail coach to Calgary, where we boarded the train. At Calgary I met an ex-member of the force named Bobby Jones, who entrusted his wife and baby to my care, as they were going out of the country for safety's sake. I saw them safely to Winnipeg, where I parted from them.

The news of the capture of Riel had traveled fast, and I was greatly amused when, on my passage through St. Thomas, Ont., some wag started the rumor that I was the man who had made the capture, and I became the cynosure of all eyes while waiting for a train to take me to Toronto. A newspaper reporter called on me,

and later presented me with a copy of his newspaper, which contained a long interview which he claimed to have had with me. Even after I boarded my train, I noticed quite a procession of people passing through the car, and I found that I was the object of their curiosity. My denial did not seem to be accepted as *bona fide*, perhaps owing to the fact that my Western accoutrements—with pith helmet, knickerbockers, and sun-burned complexion which made me appear like a boiled lobster—were all against me. In addition, I had with me quite a number of Indian relics, in the shape of bows and arrows, buckskin gun-cover, lariat and other things, which certainly did make me look the part.

The train finally left for Toronto and eventually for Montreal, where I found myself again, after six years of absence, glad of the interesting and wonderful experiences which seldom come to a young man between the ages of eighteen and twenty-four. I was a hundred times healthier than when I left, and I hope wiser, as well.

AFTER A LAPSE OF THIRTY-SEVEN YEARS

THREE years ago, accompanied by my wife, who was born in New York, I decided to take a trip Westward, to show my better half the old stamping grounds of which I had related so many tales, and to see again for myself the old familiar spots, interesting to me in so many ways.

We left New York by the Pennsylvania Railroad, and, going through Chicago and St. Paul, we soon found ourselves in Winnipeg. Here we made a most delightful call on Mrs. A. W. Ross at her manor, "La Verendrye," on the Crescent. Mrs. Ross, whom we had had the pleasure of meeting at Atlantic City a couple of years before, was the widow of a former member of Parliament, who, at the time of the building of the Canadian Pacific Railway, was their Engineer-in-Chief, and who had located Vancouver as their terminal. Owing to the fact that we were soon to see that beautiful city, Mrs. Ross took particular pride in bringing out an old photograph of Vancouver, which showed the first locomotive from the East arriving at the place. Plainly to be seen in the picture was their son, a boy of about twelve years of age at that time, but now a strapping, fine-looking man, who shortly after was introduced to us as Major Ross, the Recruiting Officer in Winnipeg.

sunning himself on a snow bank. We passed the word to some hunter, who secured him; and I now have the skin, mounted as an ornament and souvenir, in my home in New York.

From Field we went to Banff, and from there to Calgary. From Calgary I took a trip to Lethbridge, 110 miles south, on purpose to see an old companion of former days, Billy Irwin, who is now Clerk of the Court at that place. I found him a man of seventy, looking the same to me as if it were only a couple of months before that I had left him. Although I had not seen him in thirty-five years, he was unchanged.

From Lethbridge we went westward again to Fort McLeod, where I had been so many years before. To my astonishment, I found it about the only place in all the West which had not changed in appearance. All other places, such as Regina, Moose Jaw, Medicine Hat and Calgary, have become wonderful, clean and pretty cities, but McLeod is still the frontier town. We took our only meal at McLeod at a Chinese restaurant, and found the cuisine about the best we had met on our trip.

We left McLeod at eleven P. M., when there was still some slight sign of daylight, and, passing through Moose Jaw, went southeast to Minneapolis and Chicago, then to New York, where we arrived two minutes ahead of our schedule, after a journey of twenty-one days, having covered 6,000 miles, with but two hours of rain during the entire trip—which is, I believe, a record.

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